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ABSTRACT

The material in this publication derives from the Annual General Conference of the British Educational Administration Society (BEAS) held at the London College of Furniture on November 15-16, 1974. The main objective of the conference was to clarify some of the intellectual and attitudinal problems surrounding participative decision-making at the institutional level. The first paper examines the role of the head of the institution, the community, teaching staff, nonteaching staff, clients, parents, the local education association, and the central government in institutional decision-making. The other major paper deals with the participation of the teaching staff in school decision-making. Discussion of Circular 7/70 is included along with case material from a school that examined the creation of an academic board for school governance. (Author/IRT)

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Vol 7 No 15

Coombe Lodge Report

B.E.A.S. Conference

Participation, Accountability and Decision-making at Institutional Level

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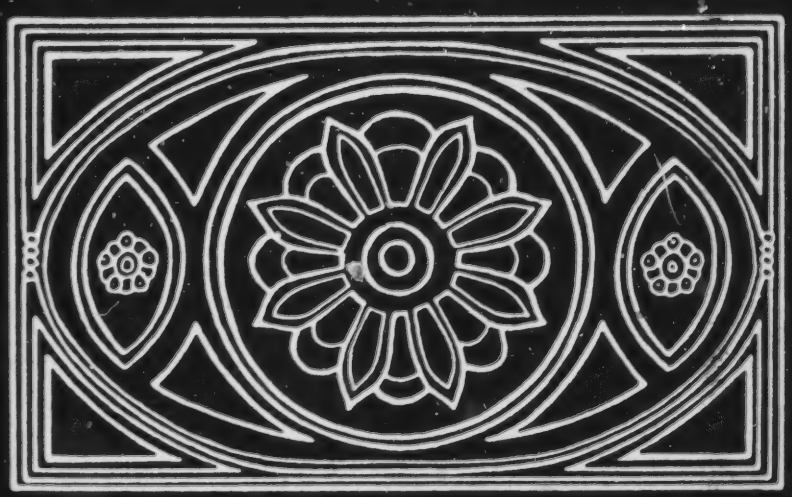

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PARTICIPATION, ACCOUNTABILITY AND DECISION - MAKING AT INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL

Vol.7. No.15. 1974.

B.E.A.S. Conference

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FOREWORD

As with Coombe Lodge Report Volume 5 No. 5, and Educational Administration Bulletin Volume 1 No. 1, the substantive text of this issue is a joint publication of the Further Education Staff College and the British Educational Administration Society. The material derives from the Annual General Conference of BEAS held at the London College of Furniture on November 15th and 16th, 1974. Over 120 educationalists attended, covering a wide spectrum of interests including LEA administrations, the Polytechnics, the Colleges of Education, the Universities, Further, Secondary and Primary Education and additionally European and North American observers.

The main objective of the conference was to clarify some of the intellectual and attitudinal problems surrounding participative decision-making.

The conference structure, as reflected in the papers, attempted to bring together the perspectives and experiences of different educational sectors and focus them on the evolving governmental and management framework in secondary schools. The papers and discussions reported reflect this useful interaction of standpoints. Professor Sir Toby Weaver and Gerry Fowler were respectively Deputy Under Secretary and Minister of State at the DES coincident with the issue of Circular 7/70 and well placed, now, to translate its impact on Higher and Further Education to consideration of the impact of similar structures on the schools. Mr Jennings and Dr. Roy are both Headmasters of large secondary comprehensive schools and able to take personal stances from that perspective. At the London Conference they also represented the overlapping positions of the Headmasters' Association and the National Union of Teachers. Barry Taylor is able to give an overview of public sector educational institutions from his post as County Education Officer for Somerset.

The case-material includes an article already published in Volume 1 No. 2 of the Bulletin but which is republished here since it is an integral part of the discussion and conclusions emerging from the conference.

The extended examination of the structures necessary in educational establishments for policy formulation, determination and implementation threw up - among a range of issues - the difficult area of "accountability" which will form the main theme of the 1975 BEAS Annual General Conference, in Cardiff entitled: "Autonomy and Accountability in Educational Administration."

Philippa Andrews
David L Parkes

B Taylor,
County Education
Officer,
Somerset

COMPARISON BETWEEN TYPES OF INSTITUTION IN AN LEA

The contrasts are stark: in Somerset between a college with 9,200 clients and a school with fourteen. LEAs who administer higher education establishments present an even more diverse pattern. However, the individuals or groups with the more obvious claims to participate in decision-making are common to all institutions - i.e.

Head of Institution - Principal, Youth Leader, Head
The Community
Teaching Staff
Non-Teaching Staff
Clients - students, pupils, members
Parents
LEA
Central Government

I propose to examine each of these in no particular batting order in relation to their ostensible and real influence.

Head of Institution

The Head of a one class primary school is relieved of the need to consult any professional colleagues except the other (part-time) teacher, which may - or may not - make decisions easier to take. Most primary heads are responsible for less than a dozen teaching staff. Participation in decision-making may most fruitfully be a chat whilst on playground duty; certainly my impression is that the more formal the consultation amongst staff in primary schools the less productive it is likely to be. The same may be true of larger institutions.

Somerset's Articles of Government define a Head's role as controlling 'the internal organisation, management and discipline of the school'. The potential for autocracy is thus still considerable. Mr. Clement Freud has recently challenged their power, in law and practice (TES 20th September 1974), and speaks of Heads needing an annual MOT. Unfortunately faulty brake linings are easier to diagnose - and rectify - than human eccentricities. Nevertheless I have no doubt that every CEO can point to at least one Head, and not only in the smallest schools, whose mismanagement teeters on the edge of public scandal. Unless the offender is a proven thief, pederast or goes indisputably mad, it is remarkably difficult - nay usually impossible - to relieve him of the burden of command.

The point on the spectrum between old fashioned good order and military discipline and trendy permissiveness which the Head decides to adopt is a fundamental decision as crucial to Youth Leaders and Principals as to Head Teachers. He may not take a consistent stance - the pitfalls which then open up are many and various.

My impression is that Further Education Principals know about management - corporate, by objectives, co-operative or whatever, no doubt because of their inbuilt advantage in having a staff college. Heads of secondary schools, especially ambitious ones, also know a bit about management. Primary Heads do not and nor do Youth Leaders. Yet is it really true that the smallest institutions with least resources and supporting colleagues are easiest to manage? Or that the management expertise of senior staff always makes our colleges more liberal and humane education institutions?

the Community

We are told this is the age of participation, and of the Community school - or college. What evidence is there of genuine community involvement in the management or educational institutions? Certainly they will normally have governing or managing bodies of between six and forty lay people. In practice a high proportion will be councillors, elderly and clerical - often all three; I know of one LEA secondary school which until recently had seven parsons numbered amongst its twelve governors, and I have recently been under fire from an eighty-nine year old Chairman who feels very bitter because we felt he should make way for young blood - probably his sixty-five year old Vice-Chairman. The most important point is, of course, that in general, users, parents, teachers, the young, those in employment and the less well to do are as groups very much under-represented.

In any case it is often said with some justice that once the Head, usually supported by the LEA Officer, has had his say the Governors have little or no real possibility of choice. The place of the institution in the educational system is the LEA's business, curriculum and discipline is the Head's and often the governors are left with lettings and appointing caretakers.

However, this undervalues the governing body's potential significance. A school cannot avoid being accountable to the Community it serves and the governing body is the means by which it is called to account. Where members are vigorous and interested, then this can be much more than the occasional scrutiny of examination results.

The relationships between the governing body of a school or college and the management body of a joint scheme on the same campus deserves detailed examination as a separate issue. Two aspects are crucial - management effectiveness in "nuts and bolts" terms - caretaking, cleaning, who settles demarcation disputes etc. and secondly to what extent and how user participation in decision-making is achieved.

teaching staff

The ostensible argument concerns the advisability or otherwise of teachers serving as governors or managers. In higher education and further education

it is a fait accompli, and in some schools, some LEAs take the view that teachers have other and better ways of influencing events. Many Heads resist teacher/governors because they themselves would also need to be governors, thus jeopardising their positions as the Olympian manipulators. In fact, some LEAs allow teacher/governors although Heads are not governors and in at least one case this works perfectly well.

The real argument ought to be about the degree of staff participation in decision-making. One Principal states that he "accepts a consensus of opinion and delegates decision-making" but "the Manager must retain and be known to retain the ultimate right to veto decisions". The trouble with asking questions is that one cannot guarantee receiving the answers which one wants to hear!

Recently a secondary school staff suggested when their Head retired that the post should be filled for a year at a time by the more senior staff. This brought into play the traditional arguments concerning "in loco parentis", being "captain of the ship" and so on. Nevertheless teachers in secondary schools seem increasingly unwilling to see their role in traditional hierarchical terms, particularly when they can see their further education colleagues apparently making policy via academic boards and governing bodies.

In Primary and special schools and in Youth Centres it seems that total staff participation in decision-making is far more common than in secondary schools, no doubt partly because of the size of the institution.

non-teaching staff

In all institutions little or no regard seems to be given to the views of the non-teaching staff. Their influence on policy is usually through the greater or lesser degree of co-operation with which they are prepared to receive the decisions of others. Yet the administrative, caretaking, clerical and catering staff can often be as large as the teaching staff and in ensuring the well-being and effectiveness of the community, as important.

the clients

So far effective participation by the Clients has only been encouraged in the case of those over fourteen in the Youth Service and over sixteen in tertiary, further education and higher education colleges. It is tempting to suggest that increased participation has led to enhanced friction but a diagnosis of the causes of disruptive behaviour in higher education is beyond the scope of this survey.

In secondary schools paternalism still appears to be the rule, even where elected school councils flourish. Perhaps it is reasonable that if we are educating for responsibility, then the educative process should be well under way before responsibility is bestowed. Nevertheless the pressures from students and pupils will undoubtedly intensify and it would be prudent to consider carefully our response.

parents

In my own county parental involvement does not seem to feature much in the further education scheme of things; yet most students in our Colleges are between sixteen and eighteen years of age.

Parental involvement is usually most developed in the primary schools; I cannot help feeling that this is because most of us find six year olds more loveable than thirteen year olds and a great deal more loveable than seventeen year olds. Certainly the sometimes intense emotional involvement of parents in the education of their young children can place a Head and his staff - and the LEA - in considerable difficulty; particularly if the parental attitudes are, by normally accepted standards, wrong-headed.

Nevertheless it is a brave and perhaps foolhardy Primary Head who does not these days take account of parental opinion in determining policy, particularly on sensitive issues such as sex education and self-directed learning - not to mention uniform.

Most secondary schools suffer from too little parental involvement rather than too much. They, in common with the Colleges, perhaps fail to realise how much their institutional aspect acts as a disincentive to parents.

Youth organisations have a particular problem; but they should be accountable to parents, instead of unwittingly consolidating the rift in many families.

LEA

Traditionally the contrast in the freedom of manoeuvre allowed to Principals, Secondary and Primary Heads respectively is most marked. It is obviously easier for me to consult eight Further Education Principals than thirty odd Secondary Heads, and almost impossible to take proper account of the views of 250 Primary Heads - or Youth Leaders. But the channels of communication between the ivory tower and the chalk face must be effective. Teachers' Consultative Committees have their uses, so do ad hoc working groups; but they are no substitute for LEA Officer and member involvement, physically and in every other sense, in the institutions themselves.

Most decisions involve money; I am most taken with the prospect of designating each institution a "profit centre" or perhaps more correctly a "loss centre" each having complete control of its own expenditure within a global sum. But how to take account of national agreements with unions? Contract arrangements? and the occasional totally incompetent Head? - or are these subconscious excuses to mask my unwillingness to loosen control?

central government

The contrast in the degrees of autonomy granted to various types of institution does of course largely spring from legislation. However, in one important sense central government redresses the balance; a school can determine the courses which it will provide without let or hindrance from central government, a Further Education College cannot. This contrast and many others look more and more bizarre in a county such as mine where responsibility for full-time students in the 16-18 age group is divided between schools and Further Education Colleges which operate under entirely different regulations.

final thoughts

i. The larger the institution the greater the danger of over-management. Is it really a healthy development that in both further education and schools an increasing proportion of the most able and experienced teachers are performing "management" rather than teaching duties?

ii. What is the correct relationship between the impact of the professionals upon policy and the impact of those ostensibly or truly representing the community?

iii. The village primary school may be able to operate like the Greek City State - should it? and should the larger institutions try however imperfectly to emulate them?

iv. Accountable to whom?

on what basis:

External exams?
Athletic achievements?
Reputation for Drama and music?
CEO's hunch?)
Length of pupils' hair) may be allied
Low staff turnover?
Low bills for damage?
Small number of parental complaints?
Desire of parents/students to take up places?
etc.

v. Beware of trying to quantify that which is inherently unquantifiable."

* * * *

Presenting his paper, Mr. Taylor made some additional points concerning:

(a) the professional/lay relationship,

(b) the degree of staff participation and consultation which actually takes place in schools,

(c) the current emphasis on the processes whereby education is achieved,

(d) the views of the teachers' associations on participation and consultation, and

(e) accountability.

professional/lay relationship

"Many of us over-estimate the impact of structure upon the way in which a school develops, and it is particularly easy to over-estimate the impact of the governing body or, in the case of a primary school, the managing body. If one attends a meeting of such a body it is apparent, as one sits through agendas concerned with such matters as the placing of a temporary classroom in a playground, the confirmation of lettings for that month, and the exclusion of a pupil from the school that these decisions have in fact already been taken

elsewhere and the governors and managers are simply confirming them. Moreover, most of us would acknowledge that such matters, placed on the agenda for the meeting of the governing body, are not the school's main concern. Therefore we must consider the other arenas of decision-making in order to evaluate the impact of professional teacher opinion and of the opinion of the community at large upon the way in which schools are developing. I would, at this stage, like to add the caveat that I am rather wary of using the term 'decision-making' and I feel that by the end of this conference we shall be calling into question its usefulness.

So far as 'lay' impact is concerned, it seems that parents are demanding to know more about what is happening to their children between the hours of 9.00 a.m. and 4.00 p.m. than they did, say, ten or even five years ago. Moreover, parents outside the professional, middle class groups are no longer satisfied to accept automatically what we think should happen to their children between the age of five and the statutory school leaving age.

The channels through which the views of the community can be expressed on issues concerned with schooling are, however, difficult to identify, if, indeed, they actually exist. Of course parents and the community at large do have opportunities to comment on such major issues as the reorganisation of secondary education, but most schools are involved in this cataclysmic type of issue only once in every twenty or thirty years. For the rest of the time they are, nevertheless, involved in the business of educating the young. Clearly, to a greater or lesser degree, the parental body has some impact upon the direction in which a school develops. Whether this impact is in any sense logical, or based upon empirical evidence, however valid or spurious, is, I think debatable. It is likely that the parental body will be guided and possibly manipulated by the Head and perhaps the staff of the school. Moreover, the impact of the parental body as a whole upon the governors and managers, in so far as these are the people who are really directing the school in an educational sense is likely to be fairly limited. For example, the efforts we have been making in Somerset during the last six to nine months to encourage more parents to sit on governing bodies has resulted in an increase of only about 20% over last year's figures. In any case, the governing body is a rather dubious channel of communication between the school and the parental body. Hence my first conclusion is that I can see no effective channel of communication between the parental body and the people who, in the end, direct the way in which the school develops, let alone an effective channel of communication between the community at large and the individual school. It is interesting to note that when we use the words 'community education' we invariably speak in terms of the provision of squash courts, swimming pools and other recreational facilities rather than the impact of the community upon the education of its children within the school or the college.

What, then, of the relationship of the community with the professional teachers? There is enormous variation in the amount of co-operation which exists between a group of teachers in a school and the community which that school serves. There may, in fact, be quite respectable arguments against

the extension of community involvement in a school. The dangers are severely practical. It may be quite acceptable to decide than an infant reception class will benefit if two or three sensitive, mature and articulate parents are brought in to act as teacher's aides. But what if the volunteer parents are not sensitive, mature and articulate but insensitive and boorish? The same argument may well apply to participation in parental association activities and governing bodies in secondary schools.

Therefore we must not accept unquestioningly the virtues of establishing clear, well-defined relationships between the community and the teaching force. It may well be that it is necessary to have a certain separation between the community and the school which serves it.

staff participation and consultation

Turning to the question of participation and consultation by staff within schools, may I first try to put forward the case for maintaining hierarchies? I find it disturbing that in the colleges and schools in my area the senior members of the academic staff spend an increasing proportion of their time on non-teaching duties. In order to obtain some empirical evidence I recently made a survey identifying the extent of participation among senior staff in 'management' i.e. committee work, and other non-teaching activities. I found the results of the survey quite disturbing. There was a remarkable variation between similar institutions as to the degree to which staff were involved in non-teaching activities. A second finding was that in both colleges and schools the staff who taught least were generally the most able, certainly the most experienced and undoubtedly the most highly paid. We must, at least, question this development however valuable the non-teaching activities may be. It is interesting to note that one college in the area has attempted to reverse this trend, not without a certain amount of pain and anguish.

In my view one of the virtues of hierarchy is that it allows those people who are best at teaching to get on with it with relatively less interruption than if they were in a more participatory situation. One of the problems of consultation processes is that they are time-consuming. Might it not be valid to suggest that decisions are not necessarily likely to be more honest, more useful or more appropriate simply because they have been taken as a result of lengthy debate among a large number of people? Might it also be true that the very process of consultation or of participation can detract from the educational process itself?

emphasis on the educational process

Many of us who have been seduced by the jargon of the management of education industry are now beginning to question whether that seduction was in our interests or in the interests of the public. In Somerset I see evidence that we have concentrated overmuch on the processes by which we achieve some sort of education for our clients to the detriment of our real educational objectives. As a local authority we have learnt something of value from the MBO procedures. But we also attempted to introduce MBO into some of our schools and colleges and I am totally convinced that it was a valueless exercise. I have two fundamental criticisms of it. Firstly, to define objectives in an education service is quite unattainable in an educational sense.

Secondly, the process of attempting to do so detracts from the business of educating the students. Thus my opinion is that of a reactionary, in the true sense of that word.

views of the teachers' associations

Turning to the way in which teacher opinion is developing, the five main teachers' associations are totally convinced, to a greater or lesser extent, that the teacher force as a whole should either participate in the process of decision making within the school or college or be consulted. In some cases the traditional view of the role of the Head or the Principal is seriously under challenge. While it may be justifiable to make this challenge, we ought to consider carefully some of its implications.

I am impressed by the strength of the case put forward by the Head Masters' Association. They make the point that Heads, like all those who are at the top of some kind of pyramid, should be protected from the need, as they put it, to court popularity. Considerable dangers can result from the extension of consultation and participation. One of the problems is that the process of consultation can itself help to create tensions and frustrations among those people with whom consultation is taking place. Of course, this is not an argument for ignoring people's opinions, but I am sure that most of us in schools, colleges and local education authorities have had the experience of a particular issue becoming more heated because a wide range of people are participating and being consulted than it would if a traditional decision-making approach, as was customary, say, 20 years ago, were taken.

Having said this, it is, however, clear that the teaching profession as a whole will not accept for much longer the traditional hierarchical approach to the management of schools, whatever may replace it. There must, therefore, be some evolutionary process. But within that process certain key issues should be examined and we should acknowledge that, after all, there is something to be said for traditional decision-making methods in schools.

accountability

I suggested in my paper, perhaps flippantly, that the difficulty of accountability was, firstly, to decide to whom one should be accountable. Secondly one must decide on what basis one should be accountable, and using what criteria. Some of us have been involved in the search for measures of output in the educational service - a search which I personally regard as arid. However, it is clear that the community at large will expect the education service to be far more accountable to it in future than it has been in the past fifty or sixty years. It is important that we beware of attempting to justify our activities in the education service by spurious measurements. Certainly we must justify what we are doing, but such justification should be a discursive, explanatory exercise. It disturbs me that as an education service we are inclined to emphasise those aspects which are quantifiable, for I believe that these are probably the least important parts of our work.

Finally, then, I would like to draw three conclusions. First, let us beware of placing too much emphasis upon structural management, for it can distract us from more important issues. Secondly, let us try to find acceptable ways in

which we can justify what we do to the community and become accountable to it as an education service and as individual institutions. Thirdly, let us not rush headlong into some brave new world where participation is the order of the day without realising that this has major implications for the way in which we operate in our relations with pupils and students."

RESPONSE: PROFESSOR SIR TOBY WEAVER CB

"I suppose that if one were looking for a phrase to sum up the topic of this conference one might suggest "Participation in decision-making in education, with particular reference to the secondary school".

By the paper Mr. Barry Taylor circulated, and his introduction of it, he has done us many services. He has reminded us of some of the main participants, he has commented on their differing roles, he has pointed to some of the problems that arise, he has expressed some of his own doubts, he has discussed some of the relationships involved and he has asked a number of questions.

My task, I judge, is to take this process a stage further and to provide a bridge between his introduction and both the case study which the Headmaster of Someravon School has challenged us to discuss, and the detailed paper by Mr. Jennings.

What I have to say falls into four parts. First I want to classify the participants, and to emphasise the political context in which they act - a factor which makes much that is written about administration in general little applicable to public administration and less so to educational administration; and to disentangle - I fear only to complicate further - their relationships; second, to attempt to give a more precise meaning to the phrase "decision-making", third, to do the same for the word "participation"; and lastly to relate these findings to the proposal that the headmaster of Someravon has made, to adapt and partially apply what might be called the Circular 7/70 package to his own secondary school.

I am reminded at this point of Poul Anderson's bleak statement quoted in Koestler's "The Ghost in the Machine":

> "I have yet to see any problem, however complicated, which when you looked at it the right way did not become still more complicated".

I fear I may turn out to be a spreader rather than a disperser of fog!

political context

First, then, the political context. Figure 1 represents a bird's-eye view of the educational game, played in public, under the critical eye of the many external participants variously organised in their different stands so that they may have a substantial say in the way the game is played.

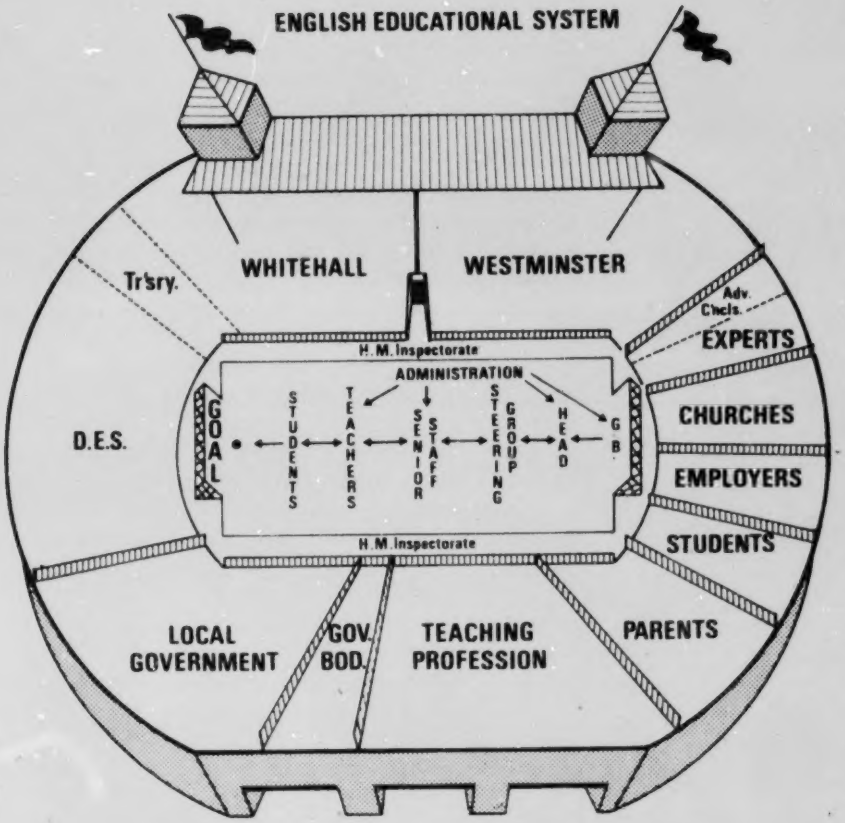

ENGLISH EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM
WHITEHALL
WESTMINSTER
Tr'sry.
Adv.
Chcls.
EXPERTS
H.M. Inspectorate
ADMINISTRATION
GOAL
STUDENTS
TEACHERS
SENIOR STAFF
STEERING GROUP
HEAD
GB
D.E.S.
CHURCHES
EMPLOYERS
STUDENTS
H.M. Inspectorate
LOCAL GOVERNMENT
GOV. BOD.
TEACHING PROFESSION
PARENTS

FIGURE 1

The game is, of course, ultimately controlled by the Parliamentary stand. Westminister lays down the rule-book in the shape of the Education Act and a number of other Statutes; it brings local government into existence; it votes the money to be spent on education; it appoints the general manager of the club; it monitors the performance of the players and discusses it publicly. Whitehall, through the Cabinet and its Committees, lays down the general strategy and settles, through the Treasury, and subject to Westminster, what resources are devoted to the game. The DES not only makes further rules in the shape of Regulations, and exercises control by the approval or non-approval of proposals put to it by local government, but issues also a stream of instruction, exhortation and advice by circulars and in other ways, with the object of influencing strategy in line with changing circumstances and ideas.

I do not need to particularise the powers over the game exercised by the other participants here - they will be known to you all. I shall call all those shown here as, collectively, the external participants. They continally redefine the way in which the game ought to be played.

internal participants

So much for the political context. For the purpose of this conference I have shown the field of play as the individual institution and I shall refer to the players as the internal participants. I have shown the governing body in goal because Westminster, Whitehall, the DES and local government have delegated to it some of their powers over the game with the result that it has attenuated responsibilities to carry out those tasks which are the responsibility of the Secretary of State as captain of the whole game: to defend the team against attack, i.e. to resist opposition to the purposes and effectiveness of the school or college; to promote education; to manage such resources as Westminster, Whitehall, the DES and local government have entrusted to it; and, finally, to share, at its own level, the Secretary of State's extraordinary function to act as referee of the game, so that if within the field of play there is some injustice to staff or students an appeal can be made to the governing body.

Anomalously, but, I believe, accurately, I have shown the governing body as both an external and internal participant. It has the almost irreconcilable task of representing the interests of different groups. First, it represents the local government stand, for even under Circular 7/73 it retains a partial responsibility for applying local government regulations to the way in which the game is played. Second, the governing body represents the interests of many of the groups of external participants shown here, in particular, the parents. Third, it represents the interests of the players themselves. Of these, I have identified separately the Head or Principal; those whom I have called the 'steering group'; the senior staff; the main teaching staff; the students or pupils; and lastly, so far as the school is concerned, an embryonic participant whom I have termed 'administration'. In FE colleges he would be called the Chief Administrative Officer but his position in the schools, particularly in relation to other players, is not yet formalised.

Finally, the game has 500 touch judges, the members of Her Majesty's Inspectorate. They take information back from the forward part of the field,

help the Head to understand what is happening in the classrooms, meet the governing body and tell them their views on the game, and so on".

relationships

Sir Toby then considered the question of relationships within the context of education, using the Someravon case study to illustrate his remarks.

"The problem confronting the Headmaster of Someravon is to know how best to organise the relationships between these different sets of players so that the business of shooting educational goals is most satisfactorily effected. Figure 2 illustrates how his problem might be depicted. The school is shown in the context of the local community. This community is represented in the school partly by the LEA and partly by the governing body. The school and its local community are in turn set in a structure imposed by DES, Westminster, Whitehall and the social environment at large. The other internal participants are the students, the staff, the heads of departments (senior staff), the CAO and the Head. The Headmaster of Someravon has postulated the creation of an academic board to be the focus of collegial government.

His problem is to decide how the academic board should be constituted and what are to be its terms of reference (or, in short, the extent of his authority), and how it is to be related to the governing body, LEA, students, staff, Heads of Department, the CAO and the Headmaster. In answering this question the Headmaster of Someravon must, if he is to do his job thoroughly, consider to what extent and in what ways the inter-relationships between all the other participants, indicated by each line in the diagram, will be changed - and therefore disturbed.

In making any change account must be taken of the constraints exercised by the outer circles. This is not to say that they are unalterable, but they cannot be changed from within. Before any internal innovation is possible it must be asked whether it involves some change in the outer structure. If so, the innovation must begin by involving those people who are able to change the external structure. Thus the Headmaster must be aware that if he is going to introduce an academic board into the school, his concern is not solely with the changed relationships which will result between himself and the governing body but the disturbances in every other relationship indicated by the lines in the diagram.

Many of these relationships in the FE institutions have been examined closely in documents issued by Coombe Lodge and many of the problems are raised in the documents attached to the case study. Is there any way of simplifying the problem conceptually? I should like, hesitantly, to suggest two ways. I believe the first thing is to come to terms with the many notions wrapped up respectively in the terms "decision-making" and "participation".

decision-making

First, decision-making. What,exactly, is a decision? - the exercise of choice, I suppose, among a number of possible actions. If that is right, we all make thousands of decisions every day. If that is what all the writers on management and administration mean by decision-making it does not seem to

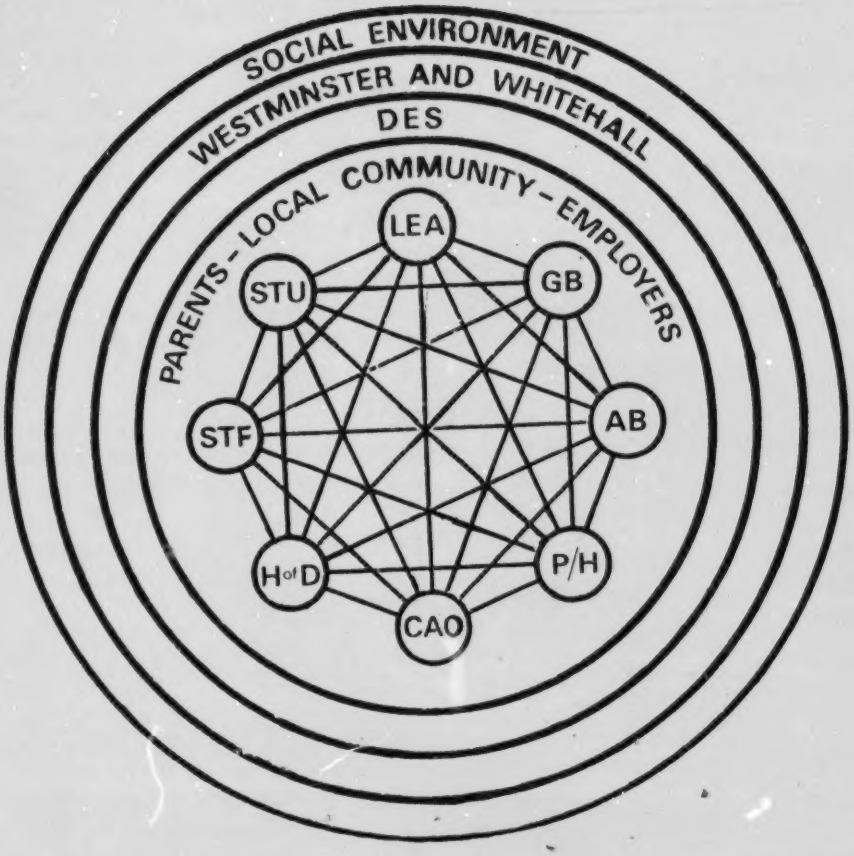

SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT
WESTMINSTER AND WHITEHALL
DES
PARENTS - LOCAL COMMUNITY - EMPLOYERS
LEA
GB
AB
P/H
CAO
H of D
STF
STU

FIGURE 2

me to be very helpful. Or does a decision mean the thing that Bernard Shaw said Hell is paved with - an intention? "I 'decide' now to go to bed early tonight, but tell nobody and in fact retire at 3.00 a.m.". That, I suppose, is an abortive decision and as such, has no significance. Would I have converted it from a mental intention into a decision if I had told somebody, but still not acted upon it? Is a decision to be regarded as such only if it is acted upon? I do not know. It is impossible to say what a decision is unless one knows the particular context.

policy

In view of these ambiguities I shall do my best to avoid the phrase decision-making and speak instead of policy - to which I give its dictionary meaning of "a course of action adopted as advantageous or expedient". If we substitute "policy-making" for "decision-making" are we in any better case? I believe we are, with one essential proviso. We should, I tentatively suggest, divide policy-making conceptually into three distinguishable stages - the formulation of policy, the determination of policy and the implementation of policy. While these stages of course overlap they need to be analysed separately.

policy formulation

The first stage - formulation - itself has a number of phases. In the presence of so many experts I shall not analyse it further than to say that it involves the complex interplay - in ways over which experts bitterly disagree - between the analysis of problems, the setting of objectives, the contriving of strategies or options, and the working out of their consequences in terms of resources, organisation and programmes and in the light of restraints put upon the process (as the stadium diagram shows) by the external structure. All of these processes of course involve a host of different kinds of decisions, but this first stage - policy formulation - is completed when a realistic list of options or strategies has been drawn up, and the probable results of each worked out and the cost and benefits of each assessed. I subsume all the phases of this preparatory stage under the word "formulation". (Here we are on the edge of that happy hunting-ground where administrators chase recently identified species of alphabetic prey such as PAR, PESC and PPBS).

policy determination

The second stage is policy determination. Somebody - an individual or group - with authority to do so - has to determine which course of action is to be followed out of the measured possibilities presented at the end of stage one and make a public commitment to it. The completion of this stage is represented, for example, by the issue of a White Paper, the public minuting of the resolution of an Education Committee, the publication of a prospectus of courses by a college, or the issue of a syllabus by an examining body.

policy implementation

The third stage is policy-implementation. The key word here is action - the performance of a series of tasks which in turn involves processes of organisation, administration, management and regulation. As a newcomer to the literature I should find it a great help if in every book which deals with any of these four elusive words the phrase decision-making were to be replaced, in its context, by either policy-formulation, policy-determination or policy-implementation.

participation

That, I hope, clears the ground for dealing with that other weasel word, "participation". Literally it means sharing or involvement. There is a distinction to be drawn here between the quantum of authority to be given to a participant group, e.g. an academic board, and the strength of representation on that group to be given to the different participants, external and internal. This is, in effect, the difference, in a related context, between the articles of government (which set out the terms of reference) and the instrument of government (which sets out the constitution) of the body.

As to the quantum of authority that a group is to enjoy (which can be very weak), if what I said earlier makes sense, this quantum may well differ as between the three stages of policy. At the policy-formulation stage the quantum of authority will be at its strongest if the body or person from whom it derives its powers has, in relation to stated tasks, no power to act other than on the group's recommendation. This is, for example, the relationship between a university council and its senate. It will be at its weakest where the group has no authority to offer advice unless it is called upon to do so. This, for example, was the case with the pre-war Consultative Committee. It was at the passive end of the consultative process. The group's authority will be moderately strong if it can take the initiative in making recommendations without waiting to be invited to do so.

It is at the stage of policy determination that the issue is at its sharpest. The group's quantum of authority will be strong if it has complete power to determine policy over stated tasks, weaker if the body from which it receives its delegated powers has power to review its conclusions, weaker still if it has in effect only the power to recommend or advise, or the right to be consulted.

In other words, depending partly upon the policy stage that is at issue, "participation" can mean anything from determination of poli
(i.e. legislation) at one end of the scale, to mere listening or observing, at the other, with intermediate points represented by such words as veto (i.e. negative determination), innovation, consultation, negotiation, advice, or even alienation - this last being negative participation. It seems to me, then, to follow that the word participation has little usefulness unless it is accompanied by some qualifying term to indicate what I have called its strength and the Americans call its "clout". At the risk of labouring the point I must repeat that whichever of the modes of participation is at issue each person or group involved in it is engaged in decision-making from moment to moment - even if his decision takes the form of maintaining a pregnant silence!

authority of academic board

If, to return to the academic board, its power is to be simply advisory (as the Headmaster of Someravon proposes) the question still arises: whom is it to advise - the governing body, or, as he suggests, the Headmaster, or both?

How much authority is to be given to the academic board will also, as I have implied, depend upon, and differ according to, the stated tasks given to it, and in particular upon the force that is to be given to the word "academic".

The Board may be given different degrees of authority for dealing with different tasks. Does its authority include resource allocation, for example, or is this excluded by the emphasis on the word "academic"?

At the third stage, similar questions about participation arise. What continuing responsibility, if any, in supervising and monitoring the implementation of the policies it has determined is to be given to the academic board vis-a-vis the other internal participants - Principal, Heads of Department, CAO, main teaching staff?

The answer to all these questions will in part determine, and in part be determined by, the way the academic board is constituted. These questions will also all have to be asked and answered over again when the academic board, once established, has to consider what committees and sub-committees to set up, and what their terms of reference and constitution are to be.

I have been talking so far about authority which, in terms of what I have said, is the legitimated right to determine policy and enforce its implementation. It is not, as Mr. Parkes has reminded us, the same thing as power. You can have authority without power (as a recent Prime Minister discovered) and you can have power without authority (as anybody with an ounce of political sophistication well knows).

spheres of influence

I spent yesterday afternoon (November 14th) discussing Circular 7/70 on the Government of Further Education Colleges with the Heads of Department of 60 such Colleges, and they confirmed that after all the terms of reference and constitution-making had been completed the picture looked to them something like that demonstrated in Figure 3. The circles represent the overlapping spheres of interest and influence of the internal participants. Their spheres of influence change in size and position as the power of those who inhabit them waxes and wanes. It is evident from the views of the HMA that if the Circular 7/70 package were to be applied to the secondary schools they fear that they might not be able to preserve for the headmaster even the small area of untrammelled authority allowed to the principal in this picture. In actual life there is a separate game in which the occupants of each of the spheres of influence try to make their own power wax and that of others wane. They can try to do this either by attempting to broaden the area of their circle in order to cover more of someone else's territory or by keeping the same area but moving by conspiratorial means into alliances so that between them they cover an important total number of tasks, thus keeping others at bay.

Here then, to sum up, are what seem to me to be the questions to be asked and answered, and a way of looking at them. I have spoken of three sets of variables - the participants, external and internal; the different stages of policy making and the modes of participation which each may involve; and the different tasks to be discharged within the institution.

interplay between the variables

It is very difficult to keep in mind the interplay within and between these three sets of variables, yet I believe that for them to make any sense they must be

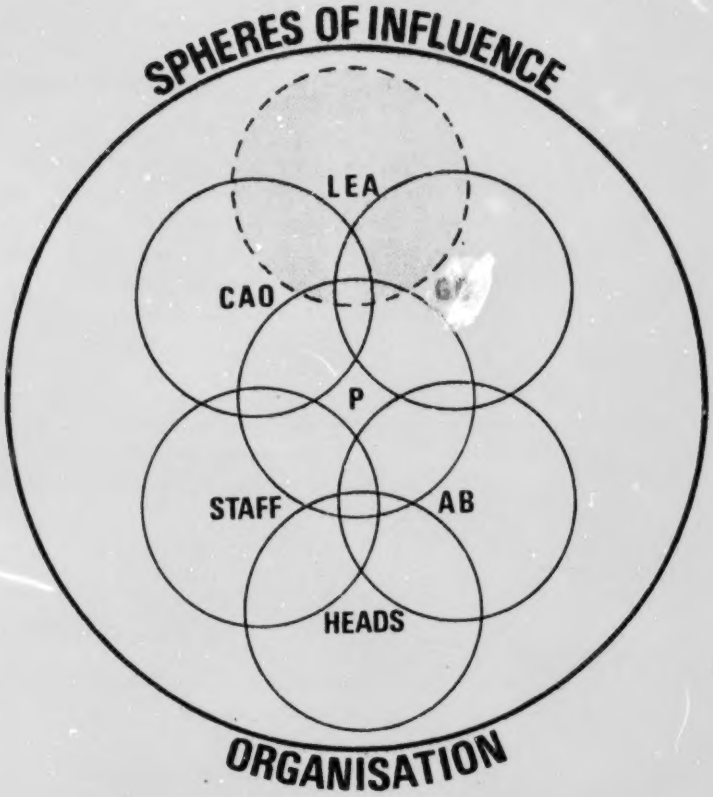


FIGURE 3

considered simultaneously. Therefore I have devised the simple mental aid illustrated in figure 4. In the diagram each of the three wheels represents one of the three variables. Wheel (1) represents the three stages of policy making, wheel (2) the participants in the educational process and wheel (3) the education process - the curriculum and the tasks such as organisation which are subservient to it. If each wheel were attached at its centre so that it could be spun freely it would be possible to see, in visual form, the interplay of the three sets of variables which is involved in every question concerned with the policy process.

Given that the school is firmly set within a structure laid down by the central external participants - Westminster, Whitehall and DES - and further shaped by the local external participants - LEA, local community and parents - how are the latter to be represented through the Governing Body? How are the internal participants - principal or headmaster, administrators, heads of departments teaching staff and students - to be given a rightful share in the control of their destinies, to the end that, by appropriate representation on governing body, academic board or its committees as the case may be, they can be properly involved in the formulation, determination and implementation of policy; this all to be done by reference to the ultimate academic task to be performed (indicated in diagram 4 by the letter 'C', standing for curriculum), to which the other tasks - organisation, job allocation, maintenance, staffing, control of resources, welfare (classify them how you will) are subservient?

need for balance

The dilemma then is this. The principle of freedom suggests that every member of an institution should have, or share, as great a measure as possible of power to exercise discretion over the performance of his own tasks, and to formulate and determine the policies from which they arise. This argues for a flexibly organic and responsive form of organisation, but it is time-consuming and conducive to conflict. The principle of order suggests that the internal life of an institution should be so arranged as to enable all its members to act predictably, consistently and in concert. This argues for a firm authority framework and clear definitions of powers, rights and duties. It makes for speed of action; it suffers however from the familiar defects of bureaucracy. The art of government, organisation and management is to devise a happy balance between these two principles.

One last thought by way of postscript: given that Circular 7/70 represents a desirable and practicable way of running an FE college (and it is not for me to beg that question), is its possible application to a secondary school affected by the facts that (a) ten times as many institutions are involved and (b) their clients represent a captive rather than a voluntary audience? Should these two considerations affect the distribution of power between LEA, governing body, academic board and other internal participants?"

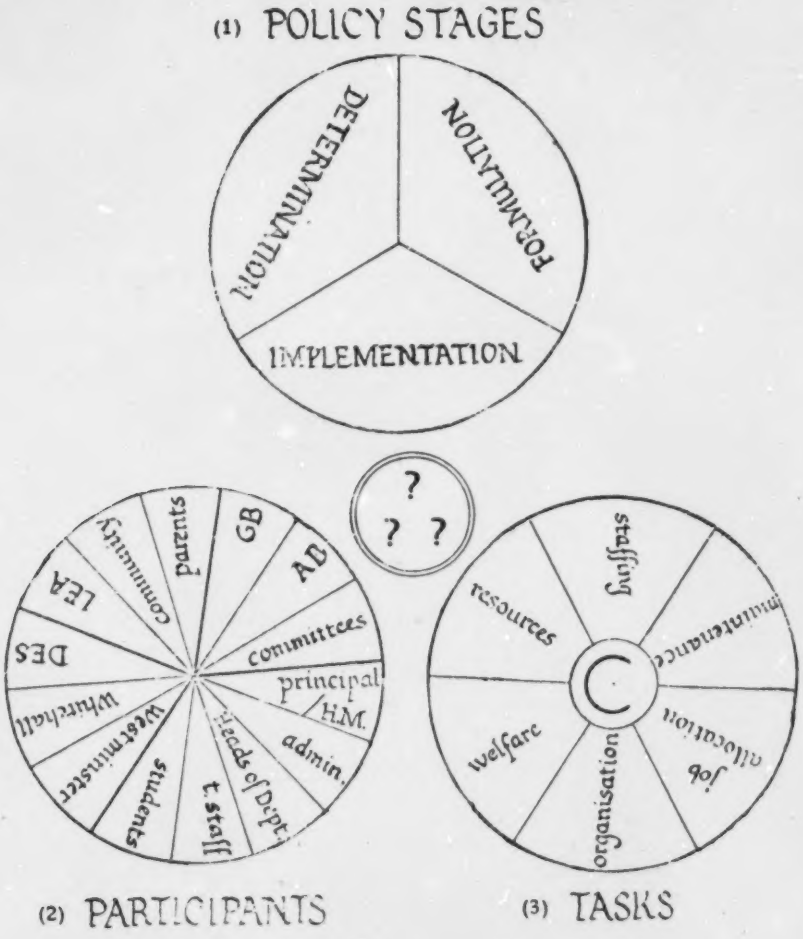

(1) POLICY STAGES
FORMULATION
IMPLEMENTATION
DETERMINATION
?
? ?
(2) PARTICIPANTS
parents
GB
AD
committees
principal/H.M.
admin.
Heads of Dept.
t. staff
students
Westminster
Whitehall
DES
LEA
community
(3) TASKS
staffing
maintenance
job allocation
organisation
welfare
resources

FIGURE 4

Discussion Arising

During the discussion which followed Mr. Taylor's presentation of his paper and Sir Toby's response, six main issues were debated: the head's tenure, policy implementation, the child as client, the possibility of pressure groups manipulating the democratic system to their own advantage, the fear of sanctions being applied against staff and students who express their views freely in the participatory process, and the inevitability of increased participation in policy making.

tenure of the head

The first comment to come from the floor was that the head's permanent tenure could adversely affect the operation of the democratic process within schools. Sir Toby agreed, saying that the more accustomed a head was to the untrammelled exercise of authority in an autocratic manner, the more difficult it was for him to change to a more democratic role. However precisely the rules of participation were formulated, a head who was determined to continue as an autocrat would be able to make nonsense of them.

policy implementation

Commenting on the use of the term 'decision-making' a member stated that there was a point at which policies were interpreted in terms of implementation, and a choice was made. Most people would term that choice a decision. Sir Toby did not agree, saying that the term confused statement of intent with action. He thought there was a need to consider whether at the stage of implementation control should be handed over from the policy-making structure to a separate implementation/management structure, with, possibly, an old-fashioned chain of command. He could not conceive of an organisation running successfully without some type of bureaucratic structure being in operation at some point.

the child as client

It was noted that little mention had so far been made of the client's role in decision-making in schools. While, of course, some pupils were too young, many others were quite mature enough to participate. Mr. Taylor accepted this. He felt that what had so far been said at the conference had been insufficiently child-centred. A participant suggested that in the crucial issue of whether or not policy was effective on behalf of the child, the ability of that child to express an opinion affected the arrangements that were made. Sir Toby remarked that part of the process of policy formulation was widespread consultation with representatives of as many interested groups as possible. As he had said earlier these would include parents and teachers. He asked which other groups the conference might suggest could play the role of 'godparents' for children too young to participate in policy making themselves. It was mooted that the National Children's Bureau might have a part to play, but Sir Toby was doubtful that it would be able to provide the staff to cope with such involvement. There was a danger that if too many interests were to play a direct part every service would be guarded by an army of ombudsmen. In a democracy it was essential that there was trust.

This raised the more general issue of the child's needs. A conference participant referred to a pamphlet published by the Leeds Institute of Education which

considered the needs of children in particular age ranges and, following from this, tried to establish what was required by teachers in order for them to service these. It was essential to begin by thinking of needs in terms of the consumer - even the inarticulate infant consumer - and build up policy from this. Sir Toby doubted whether this approach established the real requirements of the consumer. It was more likely that policy was constructed on the basis of what others thought the consumer ought to have.

manipulation by pressure groups

Taking up Sir Toby's remark that in a democracy people had to trust one another, a participant asked if there were any ways in which one could avoid the formation of pressure groups who would manipulate the democratic system. Sir Toby said he knew of no way to ensure that this did not happen, but added that autocracy could be manipulated as well as democracy. Did this mean that he was suggesting that it was simply a value judgement as to whether or not a benevolent despot was less desirable than the system of participation which was being advocated, asked the member? Sir Toby refuted this suggestion, saying that it was an over-simplification. There were many other values involved which supported the introduction of increased participation. For example, the educative process of learning to operate democratically was an important value which accrued from participation.

fear of sanctions

Was it possible to create any safeguards against sanctions being put upon students and staff who spoke openly, sanctions concerned, for example, with examination results or career opportunities, asked a participant? Sir Toby felt that it would be impossible for these things to be monitored - if they were, life would consist of endless appeals to higher authorities against decisions which are objected to. Fear of sanctions should not inhibit people from expressing their views. If we took account of such fears, we would never achieve anything.

inevitability of increased participation

Finally, a participant made the point that the HMA were mistaken in thinking that they had any choice in the matter of participation. Participation was inevitable firstly because so many of the teachers in schools demanded it, secondly because it was essential in large schools. As it was inevitable, it seemed sensible to make the best use of it. It two advantages were that there was more likelihood of reaching better decisions with consultation than without it, and that people would feel more committed to decisions if they had been consulted before the decisions were made.

Mr. Taylor accepted the fact that increased participation was inevitable but felt that there was something to be said for arranging a 'hiccup' in the process of its implemtnation. This would give the opportunity to consider the implications of a massive proliferation of discussion, debate, Boards and Councils.

In conclusion, he said that his greatest concern was accountability. The education service would in the future be under great pressure from the community at large to justify what it did, and the issue of accountability was of equal and probably greater consequence than the way in which policy was arranged within institutions.

A Jennings,
Headmaster,
Ecclesfield
Comprehensive
School,
Sheffield

THE PARTICIPATION OF THE TEACHING STAFF IN DECISION-MAKING IN SCHOOLS

No school rules itself, least of all any maintained school. So much of the school is run from outside, often from a very long way outside. We are discussing what should happen in the case of those decisions which are now left to the school to take. After the DES has issued its regulations, the Burnham Report has been adopted, the Education Committee has passed its resolutions and its officers have issued their instructions, the NJIC's have produced their salaries and conditions for non-teaching staff, the GCE Boards and the Universities have made their decisions and laid down their conditions, what questions remain open after that are the field for 'the decisions' that we are now to discuss.

The only school where the head makes all the decisions is a one-teacher school (though there remains the caretaker). In any school of any size or complexity there are a large number of decisions which are not taken by the head. There is a large area in which decisions could quite well be taken centrally or could be left to be taken by those members of staff concerned with running the part of the school affected by them. In practice there are two ways in which the same factor comes out and which arouse interest and feeling -

1. In the case of decisions taken 'centrally', what does 'centrally' mean in practice?

2. In the area where decisions can be taken centrally or by those particular members of staff concerned, how many such decisions are taken centrally and how many are left to the staff concerned?

The purpose of this conference is to clarify; let us try to do some clarifying. Let us see just what it is we are talking about, before we try to make interesting or worthwhile observations about it. Let us then make two sets of distinctions.

1. Distinguish between:

   (a) One man (e.g. head) decides on his own
   (b) Consultation
   (c) Delegation
   (d) Participation

a. one man rule — The head may think about a question, study it, collect or pursue relevant facts, but then he decides, on his own, and then announces 'This is the decision on such-and-such'.

b. consultation — The head asks other peoples' opinions and recommendations on the question. But he then decides and it is still his decision; he need not accept the recommendations. It would be possible for a head to consult the whole staff, to receive a unanimous recommendation and then to decide to do something else.

On this (i) the head must take serious notice of the views of those he consults. If he decides what to do and then asks several people or groups of people their views, without the slightest intention of altering the decision he has already taken, that's not consultation. If he asks their views before he has decided, but in deciding takes no account at all of the views they have expressed, that's not consultation. Both are deceptions, shams - he feigns consultation and appears to consult but in reality there is no consultation. (This distinction will be familiar in the case of some LEAs 'consulting' their teachers on e.g. schemes of secondary reorganisation.)

This is a difficult distinction in that it causes great difficulty for those who wish to guarantee consultation and seek to guarantee it by formal systems. It is very difficult to prove that someone completely ignored the views put to them, or to demonstrate the difference between this and carefully and fully considering someone's recommendations and attaching weight to them and finally deciding on whatever balance of considerations to do something else. If the reality of consultation is expected because of personal relations with an individual, because someone feels that they know and can trust someone, this is not a difficulty.

(ii) Who is to be consulted? Who chooses who should be consulted, the head or someone else, e.g. the whole staff? If the decision-maker consults in reality, but he chooses who to consult, some feel this is not enough for them; they want him to have to consult someone other than these people. (The same point has been raised about teachers on G.C.E. Boards who have not been chosen by the teachers whom they are there to represent, and also with CEOs picking working parties individually by name). These others could be the whole staff or the members of it directly concerned (heads of appropriate departments, the House Masters, etc.), or those interested and wishing to be consulted, or those appointed by the staff to be their representatives.

There is also the not uncommon case of a head who frequently consults two or three members of staff with whom he is in close rapport, so that in some cases the school is almost run by this small group. This is different from one-man rule or one-man decision taking, but some people who want consultation would want him to consult themselves or their representatives.

(iii) How often must he consult, or on what decisions must he consult? There are a large number of small, not to say trivial, decisions which do have to be

made, (the size of the school notepaper, can Mr. S. have a day off to go on a course, should Mrs. A. or Mrs. B. be appointed as an SMSA), on which no-one would want to be bothered by being consulted. Where is the line to be drawn and who is to draw it? As with the question of real or sham consultation, it is not easy to do other than rely on the head to do whatever has been agreed; but though not easy it is possible - nearly all these decisions, once made, would become public knowledge in some way, and in each case staff could then say 'Next time we want consulting about that'.

c. delegation

This is when the head empowers someone to act on his behalf and take certain decisions in his name.

This can be one person or a group of people, ex officio (Heads of Departments, Head of PE, Deputy Head, Senior Mistress, House Masters/Mistresses, staff representatives committee) or by name as individuals. It can be ad hoc for one particular decision or for a stated time and/or covering a stated sphere (school uniform, school games, curriculum, matters concerning transport, or outdoor pursuits). These can overlap into the area where decisions might still be left to those concerned with a particular sphere; whilst in some cases (and in some schools) it might almost be taken for granted that these would be delegated, it makes for clarity and avoiding misunderstanding if it is spelled out exactly what is and exactly what is not delegated and under what terms.

If the head asks the delegatee to bring him his recommendations, and then discusses them with him, and perhaps finally says 'Well, we'll do such a thing', this is not delegation but consultation, even in the case where the delegatee agrees with the actual final decision.

The two most important things about delegation are (1) as long as the head is the sole final authority in the school, with ultimate responsibility for everything in it, every act of delegation is a voluntary act on the head's part, since there is nothing that he must delegate if he chooses not to. Similarly, any delegation he makes he can revoke at any time if he chooses to - i.e. the head decides what to delegate, when and to whom. There is also a form of partial delegation in which the head can delegate the authority to make decisions in some sphere within some over-riding policy laid down, which the delegatee is not to have the power to alter. (2) Whatever the head delegates, to whomever he delegates it, under whatever terms, the head remains responsible for all the acts of the person to whom he delegates authority. Under the present system in schools in UK, I believe in independent as well as maintained, the head is responsible to his LEA, or if independent or D.G. to his governors, for everything that happens in the school. He cannot divest himself of this responsibility by saying 'I delegated authority in this sphere to Mr. A., or to the games commmittee'; if he said this, he would be as shamefully in the wrong as Emmanuel Shinwell was when, as Minister for Fuel and Power, defending a bad decision he made, he said 'I was in the hands of the experts'. The head can properly be asked to account for any consequences of decisions made by those to whom he has delegated authority in this way.

d. participation

There is no agreed term or name for what I now wish to identify. 'Participation' has been used to refer to it, but unfortunately 'participation' has also been used to refer to situations which are in fact examples of consultation or delegation, and also very loosely to describe the atmosphere of a school which says 'We do not want one-man rule; we want the staff in some (undefined) way to be brought into it'. (Compare 'democratic' used to refer merely to a society in which rigid class distinctions are not enforced in social life).

In each of the previous three - one-man rule, consultation, delegation - the head remains ultimately responsible for everything in the school and therefore, if he is to be held responsible, must be given the power personally to decide whatever he chooses so to decide. Staff may, under consultation or delegation, have very considerable freedom and very considerable power in practice, but it is always on the head's licen and the license can, if the head chooses, be revoked at any time (like Mr. Wilson's celebrated 'dog license'.) There is also a fourth system, under which exactly this feature is deliberately removed and the head is not given the power to reverse a decision, taken by some or all of the staff, formally empowered to do so, whether he wishes to do so or not. Power to take decisions may be vested in an individual or in groups of staff, in both cases by name as individuals or ex officio or as elected, or in the whole staff; this could be for a particular decision, or for certain stated spheres, or for all the decisions made in the school. The distinguishing feature common to them all is that someone other than the head takes decisions which the head has not the power to set aside.

To clear away first one thing which is often quoted as an abstacle making this system impossible, which it seems to me does nothing of the kind. It is sometimes pointed out that under the system operating in maintained schools in this country, the head is specifically made responsible for everything that is decided in the school, and that if he is to be held responsible for it he must have the power to take the decisions himself whenever he wishes to do so. This seems to me obviously true and sound moral philosophy but it does not prevent anyone who wishes to from having a system different in this respect. It only means that before they could set up such a system, they must change those instruments and articles of government and any other enactments there may be anywhere else that make the head responsible, in such a way as to make clear that he is not responsible, or that he is responsible only so far, or within such limits or subject to such exceptions. I do not see why this could not be done if the people with the power to make this change wanted it.

2. Formal and Informal Methods

Now for my second distinction. This applies chiefly to all forms of consultation and delegation. It is the distinction of securing this by formal or informal methods. Formally, one would have e.g. delegation laid down on paper, stating exactly what was delegated, exactly to whom, and stating any conditions or limitations it was subject to; this would probably (not necessarily) be a published document. Similarly with consultation; a document, probably published to the whole staff would lay down the framework of the various forms

of consultation practised in that school - on what range of topics, with whom, how often and so on. Where either of these involved groups of staff, in a fully formal method there would be formal constitutions showing how the group was composed and agendas would be drawn up and minutes kept and both published to the whole staff. In the informal method meetings are arranged ad hoc whenever they are found necessary or desirable; this can be done by either side. Consultation between two individuals, or between the head and two or three members of staff concerned, can be carried out ad hoc on specific items, each taking five minutes or two hours as each demanded, as each matter arises. Staff consultations can be ad hoc, called together when desired by either side. The composition of the group of staff consulted can vary according to the nature of the matter about which consultation is being made. One composition that can be used is those-members-of-staff-who-wish-to-attend-for-the-purpose of considering a specific issue - this invitation to be published well before any meeting to which it applies. This is obviously very different either from the traditional 'Staff Meeting' at which every member of staff receives a three-line whip, or from the formally constituted Staff Consultation Committee, each of which may go through a long list of items of varying import and impact. In a really informal method minutes would not be found necessary, though any decisions arrived at would be communicated to those affected.

Having now made these various distinctions at some length, let us see whether there are any interesting or even useful observations that one can make about them.

one-man rule

Presumably one should begin by looking at (a) one-man rule, since if this is acceptable, all our problems today vanish, in the sense that they do not arise. Where a head is sensible and understanding, and is a really benevolent despot, and especially if his outlook on (school) life is shared or at least readily accepted by his staff, many teachers would be content with this. This is of course in relative terms; above a staff of two or three, many small decisions will be made by others, but I refer to a situation in which the head takes, on his own, virtually all the decisions in the intermediate area I indicated as well as the central decisions. He would also need to be pretty hard-working, especially in a school of any size at all.

Many examples can soon be found in schools, probably none of them very large schools, that come fairly close to this, and in which the staff are very ready to accept this mode of working. There are very many teachers in schools who do not thirst to share in, or to take over, responsibility and are only too pleased that responsibility lies on someone else and not on them, and are very content to go straight home at the end of afternoon school and let someone else wrestle with some problem, and announce the decision the next day. Whether they should be looked down on for this, or whether it is our duty to stir up in them a divine discontent with such methods, very many teachers do take this attitude. This is a fact that is often ignored, and it should not be.

Of course, in very many schools also this happy scenario would not be found to take place. Some heads are found to be something less than the pattern of

virtues required for this role. Even those who like a benevolent despot would not find life pleasant under a malevolent despot, a prejudiced or biassed despot, a despot with favourites and the opposite, or a despot who tried to be benevolent but, lacking administrative skills, unintentionally produced catastrophes, major or minor, through idiot errors. Appointing committees obviously should only appoint patterns of all the necessary virtues, but they too are fallible, people change with time, and they do not always have the choice before them they might wish to have. If the sphere of a head's direct rule is limited, so is his impact; if his impact is always for the good, this may be a pity, but the reverse situation obviously will exist. Staff are entitled to ask not to be wholly at the mercy of how good or bad the head turns out to be.

Secondly, the head will never be omniscient. No head of a school with a Sixth Form with any real range could himself do the 'A' level papers in all the subjects taken, which means that many or most of his staff will know more about their work than he does. This will apply not only to heads of departments but e.g. to the caretaker, who if he knows his job will have a fair amount of special knowledge on maintenance of buildings, treatment of different surfaces etc. which the head will not possess. Recognising this simple fact wherever it occurs will automatically produce great quantities of delegation, in important matters as well as minor ones, and will take us a world away from one-man rule.

Thirdly, there is the impact in this sphere of one of the great secular trends of the world today - people are no longer prepared to be pushed around, in the way that until recently they were. This comes out in nationalist movements, in demands for independence from colonial or imperial powers, in the fact that in a dozen spheres people are not prepared to accept something as on authority, as a generation ago they would have done. In this sphere it means that very many teachers, and more every year, would not be content to live under the most enlightened, efficient and benevolent despot, whatever obviously good results his rule produced. They simply do not like a system under which someone else takes all the decisions and they are always simply told what the decisions are and the framework within which they must work. This is a strong and wide-spread force and of great impact in schools today. The opposite attitude in this respect, which I described just above, is also found and is far from uncommon. In different schools a different balance or mix in this respect will be found in the staff-room; this too should be recognised, and often is not. But (1) there are very many indeed who wish to have some share in making at least some of the decisions (and others who wish for much more than this) and (2) there are some who would equate this with human dignity and freedom, and would say that the person content to live under a system in which he has no part in making any of the decisions is a lesser and an incomplete man.

shared decision-making

This adds up to a powerful case, and one that convinces me, for a system in which, of the decisions I earlier called 'central' and those in the wide area, which could be either taken centrally or by those concerned with their operation, very many should be taken in such a way that staff have a share in taking them.

For this purpose replacing an absolute monarchy by an oligarchy will not suffice; a head who runs the whole school together with two good old friends who have been with him on the staff a long time, or a head who, together with the holders of the three or four senior posts in the school ex officio, runs the school, will not suffice. A junta, even if impeccably constituted and wholly efficient, will not meet the bill any more than an impeccably ruling and efficient despot.

shared by all?

If the decisions are not to be taken by one man, or by a few men, must it then be by all the staff? Or by something less than all the staff - and if so, how many? Where between a few and all?

'All' would mean that all the decisions of any importance will be taken by the whole staff, collectively. Does 'the whole staff' here mean the whole teaching staff or all those who work in the school? In the Soviet Union and in China, caretakers, cleaners, technicians, students and teaching staff serve on governing councils, even in universities. Those teachers who ask for all to share in the decision often mean all teachers, and exclude the non-teaching staff (and also parents, pupils and the community). Such teachers might well ask what the caretaker would know about curriculum, allocation bet ween departments, policy on examinations or entry into higher education. But some others would ask how much would most teachers of maths and science know about this as applied to languages, or vice versa; how much would a teacher in his first year or so know about any of these things, and what would his opinion be worth. In other words there is a place for expertise, both of specialist knowledge and of experience. Both of these may mean that many decisions would best be taken by something less than everybody. If you began by having all the teachers taking all the decisions collectively, you would probably soon have a great deal delegated from them, just as you would with one man.

the time factor

Now let us look at the number of decisions to be taken and the time factor. Considering the time required to consider a problem or question adequately before deciding and the sheer number of questions to be answered, one body deciding them all would take an impossible amount of time. If you shunted out a large number of the decisions, whether to small groups, whether to committees or ex officio groups or what, or even back to the head, and said that all really major decisions would still be taken by all the staff collectively, this would still take so much time that it would not be possible to do it in school hours and maintain the teaching. If it were done out of school hours, a large number of staff would soon start leaving before the end of the meeting, or not coming at all, and the decisions would very soon be taken not by all the staff, but by some, possibly by a minority of the staff, who would be self-selected, being those who wished to stay there long enough to be there when the vote was taken. This might include most of the keenest ones (not necessarily), but it might be 'skewed' in various ways so as to be in fact unrepresentative of the whole staff. If in fact most of the decisions are in fact going to be taken by some, not all, there are better ways than this of deciding who the 'some' are going to be.

expertise

Many would think it worthwhile to pay attention to expertise, especially specialised knowledge, and to concern, and to taking most care to let those share in a decision who are most affected by it. This will mean not having one fixed group, ex officio or elected or both, small or large, to decide on all major matters, exactly as the old despot head did, but different groups for different purposes, each containing those most likely by reason of their expertise, experience and position to have something worthwhile to contribute to making a decision. This is not gerontocracy or keeping out the young; e.g. Heads of Departments these days are often in their twenties and their middle twenties at that. This can be done formally by a number of different committees or groups, each for a different list of purposes; it can be done much more flexibly and much more effectively in an informal system.

It would be possible for someone to agree with everything said so far, and to point out that this would leave it possible to ask for a system in which the whole staff, meeting for an hour or two weekly or fortnightly or even monthly, would take as many of the major decisions as that gave enough time for. If this hypothetical interlocutor knew his stuff he could then say 'If most of the major decisions are going to be taken by someone other than the whole staff, why should not delegation, exactly as you described it earlier, be used the other way round, so that the whole staff delegated what it did not do itself, choosing what to delegate and to whom to delegate it, to groups or to individuals, including even the head, to whom it would delegate authority to deal with some matter; this authority it could at any time take back to itself or pass to someone else'.

To the question, would this be possible, it seems to me the answer is obviously 'yes' after you have altered the articles and instruments of government and made any other necessary changes, e.g. legislative, to make this possible. This could be done, if the people who had the power to make these changes wished to, and such a system set up. The important question is therefore, is it desirable?

Accountability: Comparisons with other Types of Institutions

Accountability: comparisons with other types of institutions

A big difficulty here is the question of accountability. If the head no longer has the power to make the final decision he cannot be held responsible, i.e. he is not accountable to the LEA for such matters. Who then would be? Presumably the staff committee charged with them, or the whole staff, if that was the system. But can accountability be exacted from such bodies in practice? It is relatively easy to deal with a head and it is possible if necessary to get rid of a head, but it is not so with a committee or with a whole staff, with changing membership, taking decisions by majority vote at meetings which some might not have attended. This would be a new concept and there are no signposts or guidelines. It is not easy to see how such a body in practice could be held accountable effectively. It has been pointed out that universities are run by senates and councils and not by their vice-chancellors; similarly with the polytechnics, whilst FE Colleges and Colleges of Education thanks to the adoption of the Weaver Report now also have their

academic boards and so on. If one seeks to argue from these examples to schools, by analogy, I think the validity of the analogy needs examining carefully. I would question it. It would seem to me that each of these institutions in fact is not really accountable to the public or even, in the case of maintained institutions, to its LEA, in the sort of way that schools are and that most people wish them to remain. A parent who wishes to complain about something that has happened to his boy or girl in a school expects to find that he can go to the school and be received there by someone who will accept responsibility for what has been done and who will deal with him and hear what he has to say. People do not commonly assume such expectations in the case of a college of education or a polytechnic or even an FE college. It can be asked whether the LEA itself can easily exert the kind of control, vis-a-vis holding people accountable, over HE institutions that it can and does over primary and secondary schools. Why should these differences exist? It seems relevant, whether or not it is logical, that the students in HE institutions are normally adults over the age of 18 (even in FE colleges the majority usually are), that all their students are volunteers who do not need to be there if they do not wish to, and that their students normally have genuinely free choice of which HE college they attend, whereas in practice parents of school pupils very, very often do not really have a choice. What I am really questioning is whether the experience in HE gives us any grounds for thinking that academic boards, staff representative committees, etc., given the powers actually to take decisions not subject to the head of the institution, could in practice from day to day be held accountable for their various actions in the way in which it is taken for granted at present that schools should be - and are, through their heads.

One can also ask, as I have done above, whether we think that rule by all is in fact the best rule. To ask the question shocks some, who will immediately say 'Surely we all believe in democracy'. But in our democratic states and local authorities in which almost all adults share the ultimate power (1) the democracy is very, very, very indirect, consisting largely of choosing every few years which of two sets of people will proceed to take all the decisions, (witness the horrified reactions of some to the notion that British membership of the EEC should depend on what is said directly by every person who has the vote). (2) In our democracy a 79% poll is thought high; in local government it is more likely to be 30% and in trade union elections to office 10%. It has been pointed out that in some schools the staff turnover is so high that there would not be effective continuity in policy. It is also well to look carefully at the effects in this example of preventing those who are likely to do the job best from doing it and instead having the job done by those people together with everyone else on an equal footing. There are schools in the ILEA in which the head and his deputy are the only members of staff with more than two years experience, and there are schools in which the majority of the staff are in their probationary year. It is also relevant, though not a decisive factor, that committee government is slower and often not good at taking prompt, clear and decisive decisions when these are called for.

My own individual personal opinion is that it would be good in most schools for a number of decisions to be taken by the whole staff, but

(i) not a very great number; an hour or two, two or three times a term or less, would suffice for what I have in mind.

(ii) not all the staff would attend, if there were no compulsion of any kind, so that the decision would still not have been taken by all the staff, but by some of them (those who wanted to).

(iii) for the whole complex of reasons set out above I myself think that it is on balance best if this is done not as 'participation', as I defined it above, but under the present system, under which the head is responsible to the LEA even for what may have been decided by the staff, and therefore the head would decide when he would use a staff decision as a very strong recommendation to himself (and would tell them so), and on what he would be prepared to accept and implement whatever the staff decided (e.g. whether to have a House system and if so what sort of a House system; policy on school games etc.).

This is the central nub of the whole thing. Any who are prepared to accept what has been said will see that it has been whittled down to a fraction of the whole, i.e. the difference, which is the nub, applies only to a fraction of the whole of the decision-making that is done in the school.

There remain several things to be said, some of which are important. One, which may not be very important, is to point out that it is not necessarily the case that the head will always represent reaction and the members of staff light, sweetness and progress, for those who think in these polarised and perhaps over-simple terms. There are members of staff who wish to introduce new methods and approaches who are blocked by a head who looks always to past traditions and methods. There are also many heads who struggle to make such innovations against staffs who look to past methods and traditions. Another thing that can be said is that, for the reasons given above, besides some decisions on which the whole staff are asked to vote to decide the matter (and on which, under the present system, the head says beforehand that he will accept and implement the decision, and take responsibility for it, whatever it is), there is room for an intermediate area of some decisions on which the whole staff are asked to vote, on which the head will then reach a decision, but would not go against a strong staff recommendation with a big majority unless there were some unusually strong and compelling reasons for doing so, which he would set out to the whole staff at a staff meeting.

I presume it is clear enough from what has been said above that I personally think that there probably would be, and certainly ought to be, a very great deal of delegation and a very great deal of genuine consultation in any school. Something can be said about both of these.

information

The importance of the availability of relevant information should not be underestimated. Any staff who are to take a meaningful part in arriving at a decision must have available to them well beforehand all the relevant information. Frequent publication to the whole staff of all sorts of information keeps people informed about what is going on and about the background to it and removes the feeling that someone else has the knowledge and is taking the decisions. Where meetings are held with groups of staff of whatever constitution, writing and circulating discussion documents exploring the matters to be settled well before the meetings begin is very valuable. These can be written by the head, collectively by a group of staff, or by any member of staff. It is also useful if these can be published for the whole staff to read. There is an important distinction between not belonging to a group of people who are taking decisions, when you do not know what decisions they are taking or what the decisions were based on when they are announced, and not belonging to such a group of people, but knowing that they are meeting regularly just now, knowing just what the decisions are that they are presently discussing, having been given the chance to read the information that is before them and probably a discussion of the subject, and being able to talk to members of this group in school from day to day if one wishes to. There are colleges which have recently received academic boards and so on, elected by staff according to published constitutions, but where members of staff not on the board still feel that they have no part in taking decisions in the college and do not know what is going on. The constitutions may say that the members of the board are accountable to all their colleagues, but it does not seem to them to work out like that in practice. This could be because the members of the board collectively are repeating some of the sins and errors of the former sole despot. The Someravon Academic Board's constitution says nothing about the Board's accountability to the rest of the staff. Frequent publication on the lines suggested above would make a very great difference to the feelings of the rest of the members of staff; the formal setting up of such a board would not of itself achieve this.

forms of delegation

When anything is delegated it should be made precisely clear in each specific case to the person or persons concerned exactly what authority has been delegated - whether this is for a particular job or in a particular sphere or has any time limit or is within any limits of policy already laid down. What the headmaster, remembering that he is responsible for whatever the delegatee does in his name, should do to ensure that he remains content with this situation in each case, is an interesting subject which it is not relevant to the present issue to pursue here.

An interesting contrast is between two heads known to me, each of whom habitually passes on a considerable number of the letters he receives at his school addressed to himself to members of his staff with a request that they should deal with the matter as they think fit. In the one case the member of staff is expected to answer the letter and although he should keep his own copy, he need not inform the headmaster of what answer he has sent unless he wishes to. In the other case, the member of staff writes the reply, which is typed out to receive the headmaster's signature at the bottom and is then sent to the head to be signed. This is one way of keeping a close surveillance over what staff

do with their delegated authority and it would make it possible and easy for a head not to sign a letter but to have it changed first, if he thought fit. This would then be a form of consultation and not genuine delegation. It also implies that the head is not prepared to trust the member of staff fully to act on the matter on his own. The difference is really in the degree to which the head concerned is prepared to delegate authority to members of staff in specific matters.

Another case of the same difference in degree is the extent to which heads of departments are required in particular matters to conform to a uniform policy in all departments (which would then limit their freedom of action in their own department) or whether they are left to run each his own department as he thinks fit and told that uniformity of practice is not essential.

One defect of formal delegation ex officio, where a 'job specification' goes with the post, is that this is inflexible and does not easily allow for the differences between different individuals. Some would be more anxious than others to allow for this, for the fact that two different people will each have a different set of strengths and weaknesses, and will think that administration will be better if people are asked to do those things they are likely to be good at, and vice versa. For example, if a first-rate senior mistress with certain particular strengths is replaced by a senior mistress whose strengths lie in other fields, or who is a good way short of the standard of her predecessor, with an informal system it is relatively easy to make appropriate rearrangements of the duties allocated to her or to other people; with a formal system of delegation ex officio this is more difficult.

formal and informal approaches

It may be of interest to mention some of the pros and cons of the formal and the informal approaches. The great strength of the formal method is that it guarantees that consultation and delegation will take place, in so far as this can be guaranteed. Among its defects are that it is inflexible, and that it takes up a lot of time on work that would not otherwise be necessary, e.g. drawing up agendas, minutes, constitutions and so on: a lot of time is spent taking in one's own washing before anyone starts to do any of the actual work. Parkinson's Law is also bound to come in; committees, like many other things, will always expand to fill the time available regardless of the amount of business before them. Lastly, no system can guarantee the reality of consultation. If you have pleasant and understanding people you will get consultation, but you would not need a formal system to bring it about. If you are in the unhappy situation where you do not have such people you are to some extent lost from the start and a formal system cannot guarantee of itself to produce the results one wishes.

In exactly the converse of this last point, an informal approach may work very well indeed with pleasant and understanding people but it is hard to guarantee that the results one wishes to see will in fact happen in all circumstances, in particular if with change of personnel this happy situation ceases to apply. Its virtue is that it is flexible and makes it easy from term to term and day to day to see that the right people are given the right jobs for them to do. It is time saving. If consultation is to be a reality without formal constitutional guarantees,

it must be available at any time at the request of either side, e.g. staff individually or collectively must be able to see and talk to the head if they wish to, and not find that they get put off and put off and never succeed in discussing whatever it is they wish to. The Sheffield LEA is now seeking to require consultation from all its schools and although it has set out a form of academic board as one suggestion for achieving this it has said that circumstances differ in every school and that it would not wish to lay down any particular form of machinery for all schools to follow. All it seeks to require is that the reality of consultation shall take place however this is carried on. This seems to me admirable.

Working parties or groups ad hoc for each question or for particular spheres, e.g. curriculum, are found by many an excellent method. So is the ad hoc staff meeting, called to discuss a particular topic, for named groups or individuals ex officio and/or for those who wish to attend.

conclusions

So in a system which stops short of 'participation' as defined above, but which had a great deal of consultation, delegation, publication of information and the other notions canvassed above, you can have a system in which a lot of people in practice run their own show within the school; in which two-way discussion over a continual period between the head and the staff takes place on matters which either he or they have raised; in which a great many members of staff (different ones for different things, some much more than others) are brought in to share with the head in making the decisions; in which some decisions are in practice taken by the whole staff collectively by majority vote. In such a system every member of staff takes part in those decisions taken by the whole staff, attends all the meetings he or she wishes to, called for those who wish to attend, and takes part in the running of his or her department (if the head of department runs it that way), his House, and so on with other spheres in the school. He can go and talk to the head if he wants to, either on his own or with colleagues in a group of their own forming. He can ask for his colleagues on the staff to raise any matter he wishes to. But throughout all this the head remains responsible to the LEA for everything in the school, and therefore he can if he chooses himself make the final actual decision on anything.

If someone said 'This would be admirable, but how can one ensure that all this happens?', I think the Sheffield approach is the best, and I would add to it a form of guarantee, which is that if necessary the staff as a whole should be asked to say if they are satisfied that the reality of consultation exists, and if they are satisfied with how much they are brought in to share in taking the decisions that add up to running the school.

A benevolent despot with a contented staff is in fact still found. In most schools consultation and delegation take place, but the extent to which either happens varies enormously. Participation, in the sense of power being constitutionally transferred to the whole staff at least in some matters, is another method; it will need changes in the instruments and articles and elsewhere before it can have full reality. Consultation and delegation can be achieved and maintained informally or by formal constitutions. Each of these systems has its own pros

and cons and as each school is different and is in a different situation the balance of advantage will be different for each school and there is not likely to be any one answer which will be the best for all schools."

* * * *

Speaking to his paper, Mr. Jennings made a number of additional points:

leadership of the head

"In his relationship with his staff, the head is the leader of a team. I have distinguished three ways in which he can exert this leadership: leadership by authority, leadership by patronage and leadership by continually renewed assent. He can exert leadership by authority by the mere fact that he is the head. Leadership by patronage results from staff being likely to acquiesce to his wishes because they know that it is in his power to make recommendations concerning such matters as promotion. Leadership by continually renewed consent, is democratic if that word is used in its loose sense. It calls for greater effort and different levels of skill on the part of the head than either of the other two forms of leadership.

accountability

Sir William Alexander draws our attention to the importance of the diffusion of power in the education service. No one is more aware of this diffusion of power than the headmaster, for he has so many masters: HMI, local authority officers, inspectors and councillors, school governors, parents, and the media. All these groups may ask him to account for his decisions (although in some cases he can refuse). Each of these groups has its own views on education and they are often not reconcilable with the opinions of other groups. Thus HMI may praise a school's modern maths approach, while the parents may berate the headmaster for omitting to teach their children their tables. The Head's position is like that of a politician - he can't please everybody so he has to decide whom to offend. But among those whom he offends are some who have an apparent right to demand an account of him, and we should not forget this when considering accountability.

quantification

In discussing how an accountable person should render his accounts we must not forget the matters for which he is responsible which are not easily quantifiable. Devotees of PPB, MBO and so on, in their search to discover automatic methods of accounting for success or otherwise must pay regard to the fact that some things which may defy quantification are clearly important. A school is not concerned simply with vocational training, but with the education of the whole man, and it is not easy to measure the extent to which this has been achieved, how far, for example, the school has managed to develop such habits as honesty and consideration for others. To attempt to measure these things is not a profitable exercise in my view.

Taking those aspects of learning which are quantifiable, we must remember that there are different ways in which measurements may be interpreted. For example, using a school's examination results, several different figures may be obtained which may seem to the unaware to each tell a different story. The simple figure of the number of GCE 'O' level passes obtained by a school may be calculated and used for comparison against the number obtained at other schools. Alternatively, this figure may be considered in relation to the

number of pupils in the school, or the number of pupils in the particular age group in the school. The average number of passes per pupil may be estimated, or the percentage pass rate (number of passes obtained per subject in relation to the number of entries made) computed. The figures obtained by any of these methods will be accurate and objective, but each will appear to tell a different story. Thus to take any one of them without relating it to the others might be to give an apparently false impression.

management by objectives

Advocates of MBO insist that the writing down of objectives is necessary in order that success may be measured on the basis of whether or not these objectives have been achieved. Thus, in the manufacture of a commodity, let us say biscuits, the objectives are to produce good biscuits and to make a profit for the shareholders and the success of the enterprise can easily be measured on the basis of the achievement of these objectives. But in the case of the primary and secondary schools with compulsory attendance it is difficult to write down the precise objectives to be aimed at. Bernard Shaw, considering the science of eugenics, said that in breeding a greyhound or a race-horse one knew what to aim for, but it was difficult to know for which characteristics to strive in attempting to breed a good man. (He added that on soundly based principles of eugenics he would undoubtedly have been strangled at birth!). My own daughter's headmistress once commented to me that she welcomed a few rebels among her pupils - she already had enough conformists'. What, then, is the objective of the school - to produce rebels, or conformists? Perhaps it is to have some of each. There is room for a number of quite different objectives in education. As with many institutions in this country, the way in which schools should be run is not rigidly pre-determined and insisted upon. We allow different schools to be run in different ways and with different objectives. Within the school, too, I believe that there is room for different educational objectives and attitudes to life among the men and women on the staff. (Although, of course, on some practical issues, such as the wearing of school uniform, their views will have to be reconciled.)

governors

Turning to the question of the governing body, I would like to draw attention to two widely different conceptions which may be held about the governing body which are often not distinguished from one another. Firstly, there is the concept which lays emphasis on the word 'governing' - the belief that this is the ruling decision-making body of the school in the same way as the education committee is the ruling body of the education service, making decisions with the advice of professionals. A second view is that the governing body is, in effect, a consumer council, performing a public relations role, ensuring that as many as possible of the groups which are affected by the school and concerned for what it does have some voice and are able to engage in a dialogue with the school about what it is or should be doing. The Chairman of the Education Committee in Sheffield, who is himself a serving teacher, has stated that governing bodies should not literally 'govern' schools but should be regarded as consumer councils. Such an approach has an effect on the membership, the agenda, and, of course, what actually happens at the meetings of the governing body. How much difference it makes to the actual running of the school is, however, a delicate matter.

informal consultation

In my paper I referred to two approaches to consultation - the formal and the informal. I was cheered to hear conference members make the same point in discussion groups earlier in the conference. Those people who usually think in terms of systems and constitutions might feel that the alternative, informal consultation, has not been clearly enough defined. Perhaps, therefore, it might be useful if I described, as an example, the process of informal consultation which I use in the appointment of staff. At one time our governing body had a staffing sub-committee which met for the appointment of every member of the school staff, including the caretaker. Subsequently they agreed to contract out of this arrangement, saying that they were content to accept my recommendations as head, and only wished to be brought together as a staffing sub-committee for the appointment of candidates to senior posts, leaving it to the head to define what was meant by a senior post. Technically, then, I, as head, appoint staff. The word 'appoint' is a misnomer, for I actually make a recommendation to the governing body and their decision is, again, a recommendation to the sub-committee of the education committee of the local education authority.

The staff are brought into the appointments procedure in an informal manner. When a post falls vacant I discuss the matter with the head of department concerned and some of the staff. Before placing an advertisement in the press I ask whether they have any wish for a particular wording. As applications for the post are received I make a shortlist and then pass them on to the head of department who does likewise. Then we compare the two, discuss the differences and decide on a final shortlist. When candidates are interviewed, the head of department sees them first, then he and I have a discussion, after which I interview them myself, bearing in mind what he has said. After each interview I have another discussion with the head of department, followed by a final discussion when I have seen all the candidates. If I feel a very strong preference for a particular candidate I might appoint him even though the head of department would have chosen one of the others, but if we agree that, say, two or three interviewees each seem very reasonable, and the head of department clearly favours one in particular while I have a preference for another, I would agree to his wishes.

union views on participation

Finally, a note on the attitudes of the professional associations to teachers taking part in decision making. As an aside, I must point to the paradox of my having been invited to this conference to speak as a member of the HMA, while Dr. Roy is to respond, as the NUT spokesman, on behalf of the "groaning masses" against the "elite", for he too is the head of a large comprehensive school similar to my own, and I have sat with him on the NUT executive and been involved in the NUT for many years.

All the main teachers' associations are in favour of teacher participation, taken in its loose sense to mean staff having a share in decision making as opposed to one-man-rule. However, most of the teachers' associations are against the concept of staff forming committees to take decisions which the head is then bound to implement even if he opposes them. Perhaps it would seem natural for the HMA to take this view. It is interesting that NUT policy

is identical, although it did not reach this position without a certain amount of anguish. The NUT's working party on this matter recommended to Conference two years ago that the union should support participation in its fullest sense. However, the Executive made the reverse recommendation, taking the view that the feeling in the membership was that NUT policy should be to aim now for participation in the sense of consultation, with participation in its wider sense being relegated to some future and more distant goal. After an excellent, clear and sharp debate, the NUT Conference voted by a large majority to accept the Executive recommendation."

RESPONSE: DR. W. ROY

Dr. W Roy, Headmaster, Hewett Comprehensive School, Norwich.

"First, I must congratulate Mr. Jennings on his lucid and interesting paper. He clearly speaks with the authority of the head of a large school and of a distinguished professional capable of practising what he preaches. At the risk of being thought dull I have to register a considerable measure of agreement with much of what Mr. Jennings has said. But I think our positions differ in one important respect: as I see it, Mr. Jennings favours a situation where final choice on the nature of consultation is left to the school, and so do I. But my emphasis is on mandatory consultation as a legal requirement in all schools - not only large comprehensives - something which every head ought to do, and must do, and should be required to do by his school's articles of government. This is the position of the NUT and it is also my own personal position. In a sense it is a midway position between the cry for full participation and the view that the individual school should decide for itself on the degree of participation in which its staff engage."

Dr. Roy said that he intended, in his reply to Mr. Jennings' paper, to do three things: first, to outline the NUT policy and position; second, to justify and comment upon the case for mandatory consultation; third, to comment generally on some of the other points of interest in Mr. Jennings' paper.

NUT Policy

In outlining the NUT position, Dr. Roy expanded upon Mr. Jennings' description of how the NUT Executive had rejected the 1972 working party's recommendation for full participation (heads abiding by the majority vote) rather than consultation, and decided at the 1973 conference that NUT policy should be to press for mandatory consultation. They felt this more truly reflected the feeling among the membership and this position was maintained in 1974.

"Thus the NUT's present position is that by an alteration in the articles of government of schools, heads should be compelled to consult their staff when making decisions. The desired nature of the consultative machinery is not yet decided and we have much to learn in this respect from the world of higher and further education."

Case for Mandatory Consultation

Perhaps it would be useful to reflect on the reasons for the introduction of mandatory consultations in schools:

(a) the increase in the number of large schools,

(b) the changing function of the head due to educational and social developments,

(c) the growth of a careers structure within schools causing decisions previously made by the head to be taken by others - an important development,

(d) the rate of curriculum change, and

(e) the increase of external pressures, including those of a political and party political nature.

changing function of the head

As schools grow larger, the head's function changes. He becomes a facilitator, a co-ordinator, and, hopefully, an inspirator, rather than the 'captain of the ship'. The day-to-day decisions he makes must rely on his detailed knowledge and ability to evaluate to what extent the decisions will actually be translated into action. It is essential that he delegates certain decisions to others and consults his staff on those he takes himself. Otherwise he may make the wrong decision through a lack of knowledge, or, even if he makes the right decision, it may not be carried out by his staff because they feel that he is too remote.

careers structure

Important decisions are now taken not only by the deputy head but also heads of department, heads of houses, and year heads. These decisions affect the lives of pupils and individual teachers just as much as decisions taken by the head - perhaps even more. The head is tending to become the person to whom an appeal is made, perhaps against an arbitrary decision made lower down in the hierarchy. Hence controversy and disagreement are becoming no longer matters between the head and assistant teachers, but between senior staff and junior staff. The head's role is moving towards that of a consultant, a referee, one who maintains a framework within which people can work rather than one who gives out orders. In this new role, his need to consult and to be consulted is important. These developments are common enough in FE but are a recent innovation in schools.

rate of curriculum change

It would be interesting to compare the rate of curriculum change with that of technological change. The rate of curriculum change must be controlled. Without any change there would be stagnation, but there is a danger of chaos if it proceeds too rapidly. There have been many examples of heads being successful innovators and pioneers of educational progress - but at the same time they can be equally successful alienators'. For example, the creative, free atmosphere of the primary schools exists alongside criticism of the results of their new methods. Much opposition could be avoided if more consultation took place before reform over what should be done, what could be done, how quickly, and how it could be communicated. Adequate consultation with the

world outside the school is necessary, then, to avoid criticism, but before this must come consultation within the school. In my view there is a case for having specific machinery to decide major policy within a school, for example an academic board or a staff council, so that important policy can be discussed before decisions are made. The creation of such machinery depends upon the principle of mandatory consultation. Until this is established, it is not possible to ensure that such machinery is set up.

increased external pressures

Schools are in the cockpit of political struggle. Just as forms of secondary reorganisation were the essence of party political controversy yesterday, and even today, so forms of internal organisation which are viewed by many of us as basically professional matters, e.g. mixed ability teaching, parental involvement and documentation, will be the political issues of tomorrow. Already there is a trend towards greater involvement by governors, parents and students and this involvement causes internal pressures which add to those defined by Mr. Jennings.

In addition to political pressures there are economic and financial pressures stemming from the dangerous doctrine of applying the cost effectiveness measurements to institutions committed to improving the quality of life. Such pressures emanate from two groups of people. The first are genuinely concerned about the cost of the education service in terms of the resources available and wish to see the schools become more efficient. The second group is more ruthless. Its members have the mentality of cost accountants and do not understand that precise economic formulae cannot be applied to institutions which are concerned with improving the quality of life. Nevertheless, schools cannot afford the image of administrative sloppiness, of the head seeming to please himself about what goes on in the school. Schools operate in the limelight of publicity and their staff must be seen to be teams of professionals capable of withstanding pressures.

Attitudes of Teachers to Consultation

In conclusion, I should like to refer to the attitudes of the teachers within the schools, and the extent to which one-man-rule still appears to survive. I agree with Mr. Jennings that there are many teachers who do not wish to be involved in decision making, who wish to devote all their time to actual teaching, and who think that the obsessions of the teacher-politician interfere with their real role, teaching. But alongside these is a growing number of teachers who were reared in the world of student politics in today's universities and colleges of education. In addition, there is the emergence of the agitators. They are, of course, a small minority. But they do exist within the schools and the professional associations and I fear that if we accept Mr. Jennings' model of delegating decision making only to those who wish to be involved there is a possibility of decisions being arrived at, apparently democratically, which in no sense reflect the views of the majority. Therefore we must have a system of mandatory consultation which everyone can know, understand and influence."

Discussion Arising

Discussion concentrated mainly on three aspects of decision making: who should be involved in policy making and to whom they should be accountable; the degree of power which the participants should have; and alternative systems of informal consultation.

who should be involved?

The first point to be made was on the involvement of students as well as staff in decision-making. It was suggested that schools might have something to learn from FE experience. There was also likely to be a demand for involvement by industry in the management of schools, and it was thought that a formal structure would have to be set up for this. A reference was made to the efforts of the ATTI in trying to discover the correct balance between external control by the community (the whole community, not simply the local education authority) and internal control by the staff through the academic board, whether it was legislative or advisory. It seems clear that teachers in FE institutions were dissatisfied with the advisory type of academic board, whose advice the Principal was empowered to reject. Referring to the involvement of students in decision making in the FE sector participants emphasised the importance of involving their counterparts in the schools - the parents (especially primary schools), and there was a place for the parents among the elected members of the governing body.

power and accountability

This raised the question of the degree of power a governing body should have. A participant said that he had found the concept of the governing body as a consumer council interesting, but potentially dangerous in that its members would take on the attitude that people were responsible to it. This would happen gradually, in a series of steps. First it would simply ask for information and it would seem unreasonable to resist such a request. But when the point was reached that some of the information did not seem satisfactory, then it was likely that more questions would be asked, e.g. why were the exam results poor? From this stage a consumer council would be certain to move into a position of wishing to do something about those things which it found unsatisfactory. Constitutionally, the governing body has great power, which, generally, it chooses not to exercise. But if it becomes dissatisfied with anything it may decide to exercise its power. For example, a governing body which tends to leave the appointment of staff to the head, approving his choice fairly automatically, may elect to exercise its right to play a fuller part in the selection process if it disapproves of the type of staff the head is appointing.

This raised the issue of the distribution of power and responsibility internally and externally. It was argued that one way to avoid the domination of democratic systems by pressure groups within schools was to ensure that there was a distribution of both power and responsibility between the professionals inside the institution who participate or are consulted and those people outside who serve on governing bodies and education committees of the local authority and to whom the people who work in the institution are ultimately responsible.

Dr. Roy was asked by what method informal consultation could be made formal. He replied that it could be done through an alteration of the articles of government and legal framework. As a rider to this, a comparison was made between two models of a formal structure - the academic board. It could be legislative, giving its opinions over the principal direct to the governors, or advisory, expressing its views to the principal. Although they might seem very different the head of the institution was in both cases faced with a situation in which a formalised body representing his staff gave a view which might be dissimilar to his own with which he could argue at governing body level. This happened a great deal in FE. An example was noted of a Principal with experience of two colleges with mandatory consultation, the first with the legislative and the second with the advisory form. He had not found a great deal of difference between the two in the sense that both put pressure on the head as they confront him with the combined view of the staff when they disagree with him and in each instance his lead-out is to his governing body.

alternative systems of informal consultation

A participant described what, in his view, was a more profitable model of consultation than the mandatory system proposed by Dr. Roy. He suggested a method of informal consultation based on the units in which staff work in large schools, i.e. departments, houses and other pastoral care units. The head of the department, house or unit should consult his junior colleagues and their views should reach the head through the heads of department etc. who are themselves consulted by the head in appropriate bodies. In this way every member of staff could make his views known at the level appropriate to his experience and confrontation should be avoided.

Final comments made from the floor concerned the importance of obtaining a balance between rights and customs in giving staff access to information especially in a system where consultation was practised but was not mandatory. Consultation was meaningless unless there was some symmetry in the information available to those participating. The speakers were asked to comment on confidentiality - how should one decide and who should be consulted in deciding what information should be available to those taking part in consultative procedures? They were also asked to clarify accountability: of whom should the head take account and whether they saw a difference between taking account of people's views and being accountable to them?

governing body

In response to some of the comments which had been made Dr. Roy spoke first on parental involvement on governing bodies. He felt it was something to be aimed for, but gave two warnings. First, it was not easy to structure parents' organisations. Parents were emotionally involved with the school, they had great anxieties over such issues as sex education and uniforms and consequently many preferred to have the security of a professional judgement rather than democratic involvement. Allied to this was a suspicion that the politician with vision and a sense of purpose had disappeared and a consequent loss of confidence in the politician as a person. This was another reason for people preferring professional judgements to participatory procedures.

confidentiality

Turning to the question of confidentiality, Dr. Roy said this was a difficult issue. The best that could be done was to observe the normal conventions of civilised life and expect discussion which takes place in confidence to go no further. Citing his own experience, he said he had found it useful if recipients of confidential information made him aware of trends, without, of course, repeating anything said in confidence by or concerning individuals.

politicians

Mr. Jennings challenged Dr. Roy's remarks about people mistrusting politicians. His own experience as an elected city councillor for nine years led him to the opinion that there was no loss of confidence in the politician.

power of governing body

Speaking on the power of the governing body, Mr. Jennings said that its constitution, i.e. whether it was designed to be a consumer council or a legislative body with a place in the hierarchy of decision making would have an obvious effect on its power. But in practice, the fact that it was a large, part-time lay body with a changing membership made it not easy for it to take the decisions, and to keep a long-term perspective without the support and agreement of the head. The position, and the relationship, were similar to those of the members of the education committee vis-a-vis their full-time professionals, the chief education officer and his staff.

academic board and personal relationships

Whether an academic board in a school was legislative or advisory, Mr. Jennings felt that personal relationships were most important. It was preferable, if disputes between the head and his staff arose, that they should be resolved before getting to the public arena of the governing body. This applied whether the academic board had legislative power or was only advisory.

the individual institution

Mr. Jennings brought the session to a close by emphasising that the system which operated in his school was not in his opinion the solution for every school. Much depended on the individual institution and it was unlikely that any one system would suit every circumstance.

D L Parkes,
Head of Resources
Group,
Coombe Lodge

CASE MATERIAL - SOMERAVON SCHOOL

The Structure of an Academic Board

HEADMASTER'S LETTER TO MEMBERS OF STAFF

Headmaster's Office.

15th October, 1974.

Circulation
To: All Members of Staff

I have recently discussed with senior staff the possibilities of implementing a participative form of policy-making machinery centring on an academic board structure, the general brief of which is attached below (Appendix 1). I believe the advantages of such a structure are:

1. As a formal means of ensuring support for the decisions of the headmaster both in his role as leading professional and in his function as chief executive.
2. To provide a panel of staff to service sub-committees which would act as a support and communication channel for key functions carried out by Deputies who would feed ideas into and implement the decisions of such committees; for example, separate Deputy Heads responsible for staff development and curriculum development working from academic board sub-committees in those two areas of responsibility.
3. To enable staff to feel more fully committed to the objectives of the school by participating in their formulation.
4. To anticipate future changes in the structure of school government which might be imposed from outside.

My own suggestions for a sub-committee structure would be:

1. Teaching and Learning Resources
2. Staff Development
3. Curriculum Development and Course Approval
4. Forward planning and finance

My senior colleagues have indicated the following problem areas:

A. How such an academic board would affect the 'accountability' of the Head.

B. How relations might be altered between Head and senior staff, between Deputy Heads and staff as a whole and between Heads of Department and staff as a whole?

C. Could such a structure involve more than a minority of staff?

D. Would there not be the danger of a powerful minority clique rather than a committed corporate body?

More technically:

E. How would departments report to such a board?

F. How would such a structure relate to the more pastoral role of House Heads and Year Tutors?

G. Should an Academic Board deal with financial estimates and resources at all?

H. What is the relationship between the development of policy and its implementation?

I. What time would staff have to sit on committees and more importantly how would they be inducted into the procedural knowledge and committee skills required of them?

J. How would one attract people motivated to contribute to the good of the school when such people would be those already possessing a work overload?

I am sure you will agree there are a lot of problems here. To give some background to recent thinking in this area I attach (Appendix 4) a recent article from the Educational Administration Bulletin (Vol.1 No.2). I propose to call a school staff meeting for the afternoon of November 16th to sound out opinion on how best to proceed.

Headmaster.

APPENDIX 1

Proposed brief and membership of an Academic Board

The Academic Board will advise the Headmaster and the Governors on the planning, co-ordination, development and oversight of the academic work of the school.

The Board will establish such committees as it thinks fit (including, where appropriate, committees with a membership including representatives of senior pupils).

The Board will comprise:

i. The Headmaster (as Chairman)

ii. Deputy Heads

iii. All staff with scale 4 posts and above

iv. 7 elected members of the full-time academic staff of the school under arrangement devised by them and approved by the Board

v. Two representative pupils from the upper school, one being the Head Boy and the other elected by pupils from the upper school under arrangements devised by them and approved by the Board

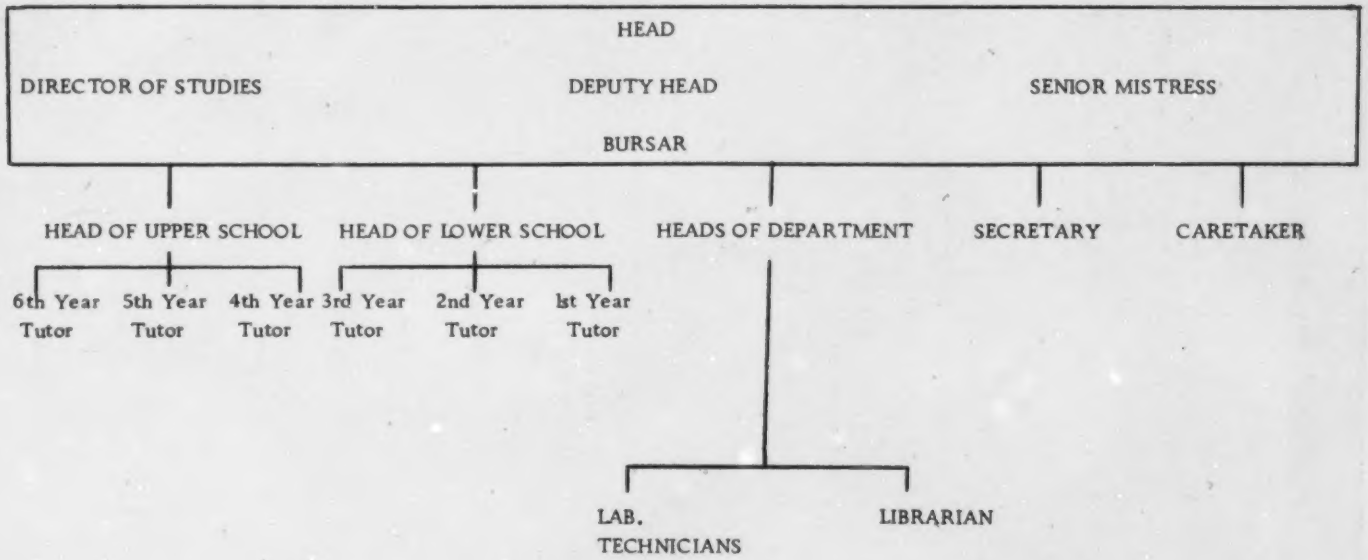
vi. The Bursar who will be the Clerk to the Board

APPENDIX 2

OUTLINE OF SCHOOL STRUCTURE

Fully developed all through comprehensive school, 1600+ pupils on roll amalgamated from two modern schools on opposite sides of a large playing field.

School divided into Upper and Lower Sections



APPENDIX 3

Job Specifications for Senior Staff*

I HEAD TEACHER

1. To be responsible to the Governors and the LEA for the organisation and administration of the school in all its aspects.
2. To present annual estimates for the efficient running of the school and to ensure the provision of adequate resources in terms of staffing, accommodation and equipment.
3. To plan future school policy in the light of local, regional and national policies.
4. To liaise with other institutions within the LEA.
5. To control the internal organisation and management of the college.
6. To implement appropriate developments in educational and related techniques.
7. To promote good public relations.

Job Specification - Responsibilities to the Governing Body

1. To prepare the agenda for the Governors' meetings.
2. To submit minutes of advisory committees.
3. To submit reports concerning staffing, finance, particular accommodation and equipment problems.
4. To submit annual reports on the work of the school.
5. To prepare reports on the future development of the school.
6. To prepare reports as required on current matters of concern to the Governing Body.

Job Specification - To plan future school policy

1. To develop a rolling programme of objectives over a three to five year period concerning all aspects of school policy under the headings of:

   (a) Equipment
   (b) Accommodation
   (c) Finance
   (d) Staffing

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*Taken from "Head's Tasks" by Geoffrey Lyons - Bristol University 1974.

2. To keep up to date on all relevant LEA and DES policy.

3. To discuss with the Governing Body and staff, recommendations concerning LEA policy affecting the school.

4. To serve on appropriate external committees.

5. To consult the relevant local educational and other institutions.

Job Specification - To control internal organisation and management

1. To have an oversight of the detailed work of the school, with particular reference to:

   (a) The planning of immediate objectives.
   (b) The appointment and promotion of teaching staff.
   (c) The appointment and promotion of non-teaching staff.
   (d) Staff development.
   (e) Allocation of scale posts in accordance with points allocation.
   (f) Utilisation of accommodation and equipment.
   (g) Development and utilisation of educational technology.
   (h) Detailed budgetary control.
   (i) Discipline of staff and pupils.

Job Specification - Public relations

1. To consult and visit local educational institutions.

2. To inform and provide an advisory service to parents and the local public.

3. To consult with local, regional and national organisations where appropriate.

4. To keep all the staff at the school as fully informed as possible.

II DEPUTY HEADMASTER

With the Senior Mistress, the Deputy Head has a large part to play in maintaining the unity of the school. To this end he will:

1. Deputise for the Headmaster whenever necessary.

2. Under the Headmaster, having direct responsibility for the day to day administration of the school which is on two sites. He will generally be on one site and the Headmaster on the other.

3. Assisted by the Senior Mistress, be responsible for the maintenance of discipline and of pastoral care of pupils through the Heads of Lower and of Upper Schools, the Year Tutors and the School Counsellor.

4. Assist in curriculum development by discussions with the Headmaster, the Director of Studies, Heads of Department and all curriculum development committees.

5. Assisted by the Senior Mistress be responsible for maintaining good staff relationships and ensuring that adequate channels of communications are maintained.

6. Ensure through the Director of Studies and Year Tutors that records and reports are well maintained.

7. Have general supervision with Heads of Department over staff in their probationary year and assist the Headmaster to produce the required reports on such staff.

8. Co-ordinate arrangements for members of staff to attend short courses.

9. Consult school-based Tutor and/or Heads of Department regarding the placing with classes of students in training.

10. Liaise with LEA Advisers, Teachers' Centre and Parents' Association.

11. Have general responsibility for arrangements for the various school functions and meetings.

12. Have overall responsibility for the fabric of the school and for the stock-taking of furniture and equipment.

13. Answer with the Headmaster queries from the School Council and Year Committees.

14. Prepare a report on school activities for Headmaster as part of the general report to the School Governors.

15. Assist the Director of Studies to prepare the timetable.

16. Ensure that parents are kept informed on matters of importance.

17. Whenever possible be available for consultation with staff or parents.

18. Co-ordinate arrangements for school detention.

III SENIOR MISTRESS

With the Deputy Head, the Senior Mistress has a large part to play in maintaining the unity of the school. To this end she will:

1. Assist the Deputy Head to maintain good staff relationships and ensure that adequate channels of communication are maintained.

2. With the Year Tutors and the Mistress in charge of Lower School girls be responsible for the pastoral care of all girls in the school.

3. Aid the Year Tutors and Mistress in charge of Lower School girls with communications to and interviews with the parents of girls who have personal or behaviour problems.

4. Co-ordinate and record school activities, visits, club and society meetings; as Chairman of the Calendar Committee prepare the Calendar of major functions - exams., committee meetings, Parents' Evenings etc.

5. Prepare School Uniform lists revising the requirements when this is considered necessary.

6. Have overall supervision of the attendance records for lateness or absence liaising with the School Counsellor and the School Welfare Officer where this is appropriate.

7. Make arrangements for routine health inspections (through the School Health Service); maintain the level of first aid supplies in the school.

8. Have general supervision of grants and allowances for pupils.

9. Prepare Probationary reports on girls and reports on girls leaving school.

10. Have general supervision over school charitable efforts.

11. Make arrangements for relief teachers in the Upper School during the absence of staff.

12. Prepare a report on school activities for the Headmaster's General Report to the School Governors.

13. Assist with annual stocktaking of furniture and equipment in the Upper School.

14. Co-ordinate arrangements for Parents' Evenings, House Activities in the Upper School and for Open Day.

15. Have particular responsibility for the girl prefects and all girls in the Sixth Form, working with the Sixth Form Tutors in this respect.

16. Keep a watching brief over stationery bought through the non-departmental capitation allowance.

17. Keep past examination records; distribute examination certificate.

18. Give permission for absence to Upper School girls when acceptable reasons are forthcoming.

IV DIRECTOR OF STUDIES

The Director of Studies is directly responsible to the Headmaster for the following duties:

1. School Timetables - preparation of timetable analysis and overseeing completion of all timetables.

2. Curriculum Choices

   (a) Oversight of school curriculum as it affects individual pupils and teachers.

   (b) Presentation to pupils and parents of various courses and options available to pupils in each year group; supervision of pupils' choices; course guidance.

   (c) Detailed arrangements for assigning pupils to subject and group choices, preparation of lists of pupils in each subject grouping.

(d) Assignment of sixth form pupils to various course and subject groupings; preparation of lists of pupils in each group; estimates of numbers for new Lower Sixth.

(e) Liaison with Heads of Department for suggested allocation of teachers in next year's timetable.

3. Development of Curriculum in the light of educational developments:

(a) Co-operation with Heads of Department for co-ordinating curriculum developments, particularly where interdepartmental and new disciplines and techniques are concerned.

(b) Liaison with Heads of Department about syllabuses and scheme of work.

4. Assignment of Year 1 pupils in co-operation with Head of Lower School, School Counsellor, Heads of Primary Schools.

5. Assessment and transfer of pupils within Year Bands, in co-operation with Deputy Head, Heads of Lower and Upper Schools.

6. Documentation: assistance with development of school records and responsibility for seeing that these are up to date - Record Cards, Report to Parents, Reports to other LEAs when pupils change schools; assignment of new pupils to optional courses.

7. Interviews with Pupils and Parents: advise about progress and curriculum choices, maintenance of high standards in pupils' attitudes to their studies. Pupils may be referred to Director of Studies by Year Tutors, Heads of Upper and Lower Schools, Heads of Departments.

8. Liaison with Careers Master to link careers work with curriculum development, with the School Counsellor, Heads of School, with other Comprehensive Schools, with the Curriculum Development Committee etc.

9. Co-ordinating the activities of the Sixth Form Tutors and overseeing the Sixth Form Block, Sixth Form committees and prefect arrangements.

10. Higher and Further Education applications from Form Six pupils and guidance on choices of colleges and universities.

V HEAD OF UPPER SCHOOL

The Head of Upper School will:

1. Have responsibility for the day-to-day administration of Upper School site, including care of fabric and equipment.

2. Liaise with caretaker and external agencies of LEA for maintenance and improvements of fabric.

3. Be a source of reference for Year Tutors and Sixth Form Tutors for major disciplinary problems, particularly those relating to boys.

4. Be the Co-ordinator of the team arranging prefects' duties in Upper School.

5. Have responsibility for co-ordinating pastoral guidance of Year Tutors, Sixth Form Tutors and if necessary for seeing parents in connection with such matters.

6. Be the Co-ordinator of the team dealing with all arrangements for external exams., and with all arrangements for internal exams., in the Upper School.

7. Maintain direct liaison with the WJEC in matters concerned with external examinations, i.e. ensuring that changes in syllabus are obtained, that examination papers are delivered in good time etc.

8. Have responsibility for issuing staff duty rosters in the Upper School.

9. Liaise with the Careers Department for arrangements for visits by Careers Advisory Officers and other guest speakers.

10. Be a member of the Calendar Committee.

VI HEAD OF LOWER SCHOOL

The Head of Lower School will:

1. Have responsibility for the day-to-day administration of the Lower School site, including care of fabric and equipment.

2. Liaise with caretaker and external agencies of LEA for maintenance and improvement of fabric.

3. Be responsible for maintaining stationery stocks, requisitioning classrooms equipment and requisitioning/distributing furniture in the Lower School.

4. Be a source of reference for Year Tutors for major disciplinary problems, especially those relating to boys.

5. Have responsibility for co-ordinating pastoral guidance of Lower School Year Tutors and if necessary for seeing parents in connection with such matters and/or involving School Welfare Officer.

6. Liaise with Lower School Year Tutors on care of registers and in scrutinising them for persistent absentees and latecomers.

7. Arrange all internal exams., in the Lower School.

8. Arrange detention in the Lower School.

9. Assist in timetabling where it affects the Lower School.

10. Be responsible for drawing up duty rosters in the Lower School.

11. Arrange daily substitutions for absent staff.

12. Liaise with primary school Head, Director of Studies and School Counsellor on admission of new pupils and on placing them in the correct Band.

13. Allocate pupils and staff in Lower School to Houses.

14. Co-ordinate arrangements for Parents' Evenings, House Meetings, Eisteddfodau in the Lower School.

15. Assist the Deputy Head in discussing suggestions emanating from Year Committees.

16. Liaise with Director of Studies, Year Tutors, Form Tutors on records and reports.

17. Liaise with Deputy Head, Director of Studies, Year Tutors on movement between Bands.

18. Co-ordinate Fire Drill arrangements on the Lower School site.

19. Be a member of the Calendar Committee.

VII MISTRESS RESPONSIBLE FOR LOWER SCHOOL GIRLS

While her specific responsibility is towards girls in the first three years of their schooling, thus complementing the activities of the Year Tutors in these years she nevertheless will assist with much of the day-to-day administration of the Lower School. Accordingly, she will:

1. Have general responsibility for the care of girls' department, dress behaviour and cleanliness.

2. Be a source of reference for Year Tutors for major disciplinary problems, particularly those relating to girls.

3. Work with Year Tutors and School Counsellor for motivation and guidance of girls.

4. Interview parents who come to school at their own request or because they have been asked to.

5. Have oversight of reports sought when girls move to other areas or are placed on probation or are referred to the Child Guidance Clinic etc.

6. Be responsible for the organisation of medical and dental inspections and for emergencies arising through accidents.

7. Give permission for absence to Lower School girls when acceptable reasons are forthcoming.

8. Assist the Deputy Head to maintain good staff relationships and ensure that adequate channels of communication are maintained.

9. Assist in the preparation of room timetables for next session.

10. Assist in general welfare and guidance of new members of staff, probationary teachers and students in training.

11. Prepare a report on girls' activities for the Headmaster's General Report to the School Governors.

12. Liaise with Senior Mistress in connection with school charitable efforts.

VIII YEAR TUTORS

Year Tutors have as a prime consideration the creation of cohesive year units within the school. Therefore, they will:

1. Co-ordinate activities in which the Year as a whole is involved.

2. Inform the year groups of general school policy, examination arrangements, arrangements for special functions etc.

3. Assist Form Tutors to maintain acceptable standards of behaviour and dress by dealing with pupils referred to them for persistent breaches of discipline. Serious cases will be referred to the Head of Upper/Lower School, Senior Mistress or Mistress in charge of Lower School girls as appropriate.

4. Co-operate with Heads of Department in maintaining required standards of class work and homework, ensuring in the weekly inspections that homework diaries are up to date and that the general appearance of text books is presentable.

5. Ensure that pupils' record cards are maintained and kept up to date.

6. Ensure that end of term reports are completed and assembled by the agreed date.

7. Liaise with the Director of Studies, Head of Upper/Lower School to arrange movement across Bands and to disseminate subject choice information.

8. Liaise with the Director of Studies, Careers Staff to ensure that pupils receive guidance in academic and vocational problems.

9. Liaise with School Counsellor, School Welfare Officer and appropriate outside agencies in social welfare and medical matters.

10. When requested or when thought necessary establish direct contact with parents for discussion of pupils' problems.

11. Conduct Year Tutor Assemblies and ensure orderly movement to and from other Assemblies.

12. Liaise with the Deputy Head and Head of Lower School in conducting such detention classes agreed on by the staff.

13. Assist the Head of Upper/Lower School in the day-to-day running of the school.

IX RESPONSIBILITIES OF HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS

Heads of Departments have complete responsibility to the Headmaster for all aspects of their subjects as they are taught in the school. Therefore they will find it necessary to:

1. Draw up a syllabus or scheme of work constantly reviewing it so that it deals not only with content but with method and technique. The syllabus should be in enough detail to indicate the work to be covered by each class in the year and that part which deals with Lower School work should ensure that there is enough common ground to enable transfer between bands to take place.
2. Set and maintain the quality and standards of work in the subject. This includes the supervising of the setting of adequate classwork and homework exercises and the efficient and proper marking of all exercise books.
3. Be responsible for the supervision of the teaching of all staff in the Department, particularly that of probationary teachers.
4. Discuss with the Director of Studies/Deputy Headmaster/School-based Tutor the placing of visiting student teachers with classes.
5. Liaise, where necessary, with other Heads of Department to draw up joint courses and methods of assessing such courses.
6. Requisition books, stationery, apparatus etc., needed by the department and to keep stock lists up to date.
7. Liaise with the Head of Upper School in matters relating to entries for external exams.
8. Arrange such tests and examinations that have been arranged as being necessary for purposes of internal assessment.
9. Liaise with the Director of Studies regarding the allocation of teachers to classes within the Department.
10. Be concerned with subject arrangements for Year Group Parents' Meetings.
11. Attend meetings with the Headmaster and other Heads of Department to discuss factors affecting the organisation of the school.
12. Arrange regular departmental meetings, considering on an ordered agenda particular problems, departmental administration, general and specific aims.
13. Carry out as required from time to time, by the Headmaster or his Deputy, any other relevant duties.

X FORM TUTORS

Form Tutors have general responsibility for being aware of the overall academic progress of pupils, for their pastoral care, for the setting of standards in their

appearance and behaviour and for the fabric of the form-room. Therefore they will find it necessary to:

1. Use the form tutorial period to acquaint themselves with the background and interest of the pupils.
2. Use this period to check on the progress, social and academic, of the pupils.
3. Ensure that homework diaries are kept up to date.
4. Keep full, agreed record cards in order to counteract staff changes and provide information for references.
5. Ensure that pupils are aware of and conform to the required standards of appearance and behaviour.
6. Liaise with Year Tutors, School Counsellor, Careers Staff, Heads of Upper/Lower Schools, Director of Studies, Senior Mistress, Deputy Head in connection with pupil problems that need further discussion.
7. Furnish Year Tutors with reports on those pupils who are frequently late or are unable to explain absences in a satisfactory manner.
8. Arrange the completion of pupils' reports by the nominated times.
9. Keep the form register up to date.
10. Ensure that any information circulars issued are given to the pupils and that any returns required are obtained.
11. Delegate responsibility for special functions within the group to certain pupils.
12. Conduct pupils to Assembly.
13. Be responsible for the collection of any monies required from the form.
14. Attend as required, meetings convened by Year Tutors, Heads of Upper/Lower Schools, Deputy Head, Headmaster.
15. Carry out, as required from time to time by the Headmaster or his Deputy, any other relevant duties.

APPENDIX 4

CIRCULAR 7/70 AND THE GOVERNMENT OF SCHOOLS

(extracted from Educational Administration Bulletin Volume 1, No.2)

Introduction

Circular 7/70, issued by the Department of Education and Science in April 1970, is entitled 'Government and Conduct of Establishments of Further Education' and applies to all maintained institutions of further education apart from polytechnics and colleges of education. The Circular offers advice to local education authorities concerning the drafting of Instruments and Articles of Government. It is suggested that governing bodies should "consist largely of people with current experience of industry, commerce and other fields relevant to the work of the college, together with an active interest in further education". The Principal and not less than two other members of the teaching staff should be members, and consideration should also be given, "in the case of colleges with a substantial proportion of advanced work or a substantial proportion of adult students of 18+", to the inclusion of student representatives.

Attached to the Circular are Model Articles of Government which ascribe to the Governors responsibility for "the general direction of the College", and make the Principal responsible to the Governors for "the internal organisation, management and discipline of the College". For colleges with a substantial proportion of advanced work the establishment of an Academic Board is recommended, the Board being primarily responsible "for the planning, co-ordination, development and oversight of the academic work of the College...' The recommendation is less specific, as explained in David Parkes' article, in the case of colleges with rather less, or with no, advanced work.

The Headmasters' Association document, 'The Government of Schools', was issued in August 1972, and is the result of widespread discussion among headmasters which also took account of the published views of other teachers' associations. The paper argues that "it would be damaging to the interests of pupils so to circumscribe the powers of heads that their influence would be greatly reduced in the future", but also notes that "the claims of parents and teachers to a larger share in the determination of the policies of schools than has until now been usual merit serious consideration and justify some change".

Some of the recommendations made by the HMA are as follows:

> "Articles of Government should not attempt to separate the functions of governors and heads. They should contain a clause like, 'The head shall be responsible to the governors for the general conduct, curriculum and discipline of the school'.
>
> The governing body of each school should include elected representatives of its teachers and the parents of its pupils.

Pupils should not be members of governing bodies though they might, with the consent of the head, attend meetings as observers.

Heads should not be governors of their schools, but their right to be present at all meetings of governors, unless excluded for good cause, should be safeguarded.

The interests of pupils would not be served by the establishment in schools of academic boards with powers to overrule heads.

All heads should establish procedures by which their teaching colleagues can be consulted fully about matters affecting their work and the life of the school."

The contribution which follows David Parkes' article is written by a member of the Working Party which was responsible for the final drafting of the HMA report.

(Editor)

Consideration, from an FE viewpoint, of the issues raised in the HMA publication, The Government of Schools

David Parkes, Head of Resources Group, Further Education Staff College.

The implementation of Education Act (2) 1968 in the form of articles of government - arising from the issue of model articles in circular 7/70 to be submitted to the Secretary of State for the 500, or so, major institutions of further education has been an exercise highly relevant to the fears and aspirations revealed in the HMA document. Primarily, what I would like to do in this short article is to relate those fears and aspirations to the problems faced and sometimes even resolved in further education. Broadly, the effects of changes in government in education institutions have been to devolve decisions down the structure towards a collegial model. Decisions previously taken by the LEA can now be taken by the governors; by the governors, now by the Principal; by the latter, now by or with the staff of an institution as a whole. It is in this context that the Heads put forward their own views of change and it would seem germane to examine their perspective in relation to the, admittedly limited, experience of the colleges - polytechnics, colleges of education, colleges of further education.

Under the heading 'The Present Situation' the HMA document comments as follows:

1.3 "These claims reflect attitudes which can be observed in many areas of our society. The legitimacy of authority is widely questioned and our leaders in every field, subjected to incessant criticism and challenge, can seldom be sure of the loyal support of their followers. Increasingly, the value of traditional means of democratic control, whether by parliament of central government or by local councils and their

> committees of local affairs, is disputed. The right to vote is not seen as carrying any effective power to influence local or national decisions critically affecting the lives of individuals, and an articulate minority argue that if the common man is to have any control over his own destiny, he must seek a share of power either through the force of pressure group, strike or demonstration or by establishing a right to share in the making of decisions in his place of employment, his university or his child's school".

It is certain, in my own view (1970), that the forces involved in changing the form of government in educational institutions have been largely political and social rather than primarily educational and have been to do with pressures within a democratic society rather than with making decision-making processes more efficient or effective. Broadly, the exercise has set up machinery in which conflict can be institutionalised and hopefully contained. The model is a parliamentary one and an increasing number of principals of colleges of further education would take that view. The immediate historical process, however, stems from Robbins (1962-3) view that public sector colleges should be run like universities and from there came the Weaver Report, the creation of the polytechnic articles and instruments and then Circular 7/70. The main theme running through has been the concept of the academic community with some autonomy in its taking of academic decisions. The difficulties have been to relate academic decisions to financial and administrative ones. (Locke 1972).

The essential point is that the further education colleges, whether or not the collegial model makes for more effective educational institutions, have been forced by legislative means to adopt it; they have a package with advantages and disadvantages which within its own limitations can, organisationally, be made to work better or worse. As the heads rightly point out there are serious implications beyond the fine points of organisational detail. Democracy implies politics. Pressures emerge for academic decisions to be swayed by non-academic criteria; for example, a tendency towards the avoidance of controversy in the presentation of course content; an increasing political role for middle management; lobbying. A good example of the politicisation of academic decisions is the row which raged over the appointment or non-appointment of a sociologist at Birmingham University. A departmental panel appointed a candidate on the grounds of his good academic record which was then rescinded by a vetting committee whose academic considerations took in 'larger' issues, such as for example, the ability of an individual to fit into a teaching team and into the university community at large. The political row centred around the question of who selects staff and what are the academic, quasi academic and non-academic criteria in appointing staff, and who decides these criteria. Many similar processes can be observed to happen in further education colleges.

The question that remains is whether the price is too high to pay for the gain of a parliamentary type stability in institutionalising political type conflict. The positive side may out-weigh the negative: the commitment of staff to policies that they have had a part in evolving - the emergence of otherwise

suppressed talent from lower down the hierarchical structure. There is some evidence that participation in the form of decision-making by small groups has helped towards a number of highly regarded CNAA degrees in the polytechnics. In the context of academic boards very able junior staff have had a major say - by the right of their ability - in the organisational design of their own colleges.

The Heads also ask how far higher education criteria can apply to schools. They point out that Circular 7/70 itself makes a distinction between higher level, older students and lower level, younger students:

1.5 "We consider, however, that it would be unwise to place too much emphasis on precedents from higher education in reaching decisions about the government of schools. Circular 7/70 recognises that in further education, it is sensible to distinguish between colleges with large numbers of adult (over 18) students and those whose students are mainly younger. Because schools exist to serve pupils of whom only a very small proportion are adults, it is of the utmost importance to ensure that the guardianship of the interests of those in statu pupillari is firmly in the grasp of those best qualified to discharge this responsibility and any proposals for change in the machinery of government must be judged in this light."

It is true that 7/70 makes a distinction between types A, B and C colleges roughly on the basis of the level of advanced work and the number of 'over 18s' students in each institution. The recommendation for A college (i.e. those with something in the region of 25% advanced work and over 18 students) is that they shall have an academic board which contains the principal, the vice-principal, heads of departments, the chief administrative officer, the librarian and not less than six staff and student membership where appropriate. This board, subject to the overall responsibility of the governors, shall be responsible for the planning, co-ordination, development and oversight of the academic work of the college, including the arrangement for the admission and examination of students. The Chief Administrative Officer shall act as Clerk to the Governors and the Principal shall be responsible to the Governors for the internal organisation, management and discipline of the college. B colleges are different in that they have a significant as opposed to a substantial proportion of advanced work, whether full-time or part-time. They will probably have some, as opposed to very many, over 18 students. These colleges are recommended an academic board which is advisory to the principal. Group C colleges with little or no advanced work are merely recommended appropriate consultative procedures. It must be pointed out, however, that of the 159 local authorities involved in the exercise of submitting articles for 501 or 502 colleges very few have opted for a C type structure. Most have gone for either a decision-making board, similar to the A type even for some non A colleges, or an advisory board. Very, very few have opted for consultative procedures without the committee structure focussed by a policy making board. Although, following local government reform, the structure of many authorities will have changed it is still noteworthy that the essential experience gained will have

been towards academic board type models for all institutions regardless of level. And, although B type boards are advisory only, the pressure is for the relationship between the principal and the board to be similar. One principal with experience of a large higher level college and a smaller lower level college has in fact commented that there is little essential difference between a decision-making structure and an advisory one. No sensible principal would likely go against the overwhelming advice of his colleagues especially when that advice comes via a formalised committee framework - even when he disagrees with it. If he seriously considers the advice of his colleagues to be grossly mistaken then he can take his view to the governing body whether his academic board is legislative or advisory.

Under the 'Proposal for Change' the Heads make the following points:

2.4 "Though we know of no secondary school in which there is not already opportunity for staff opinion to be expressed, we advocate the establishment of machinery to make consultation fuller and more effective where this is necessary. We are not willing, however, to agree that participation, in the sense in which the NUT uses the term, is desirable in our schools at the present time. We consider that the establishment of academic boards or staff councils with powers to overrule headmasters by majority vote would entail dangers far greater than arise in the present situation in which headmasters are solely responsible to governors.

2.5 Our most fundamental objection to the determination of school policy in educational matters by majority vote of the staff is that such a concept involves an implicit denial of the existence, or at least the importance of a genuine profession of teaching. A crucial choice at the bedside of a sick man is not made through a ballot of junior doctors; the experience, knowledge, skill and judgement of the consultant is recognised and the responsibility of deciding how best to treat the patient is placed firmly upon his shoulders. We believe that many decisions in schools require a corresponding, though more diffuse, expertise. The rapid spread of courses of training for headmasters suggests a general acceptance of this view, to which HMA has long lent support through its interest in the establishment of an educational staff college. Nothing can guarantee that all decisions will be wise, but we see no reason to suppose that the prospect of wisdom would be enhanced if the power of headmasters to make decisions were transferred to committees of teachers.

2.6 We are convinced that schools require the coherent leadership which headmasters are at present able to provide. Because a headmaster's standing is dependent upon the well-being of his school and because his independence makes it unnecessary for him to court popularity, he is in a position to make disinterested decisions on educational grounds. In many schools, good relationships with parents, so important to educational success, rest upon their faith that the headmaster's authority

will be exercised with judgement, integrity and dedication to the welfare of his pupils. In present circumstances, a headmaster can be an innovator, whereas new ideas might sometimes meet effective resistance if their adoption required the support of a majority of the staff. Equally, a headmaster can ensure the continuity of policy necessary both because of the need for a secure framework within which teachers and pupils can flourish and because success can often be evaluated only after a considerable period. The rate of staff turnover common in many of today's schools could cause chaos if school policies were at the mercy of every fluctuation of common room opinion and brings into question the feasibility of joint responsibility.

2.7 We have grave doubts, too, about the effective functioning of any elected committee of teachers exercising a collective control of a school. One fear which we think it right to express is that it might be influenced by factors not arising from educational considerations."

I quote these extracts at length because they are at the core of most opposition to the internal changes in government and are similar to much of the unrest expressed three years ago in further education. The analogy of the doctor is really, not very apt, since the latter is comparable in expertise to a teaching professional rather than to a principal or headmaster. We are talking about policy or resource decisions and the analogy with the educational model would be more likely as to where the resources were to be devoted; research in cancer or heart diseases. Recently, I was asked by a further education principal to name three decisions an academic board would take other than the trivial; my reply was:

1. Does the computer attach itself to the science department or the business studies department?
2. Is the welfare officer appointed on the academic or the administrative staff establishment?
3. Do we use our limited resources to develop "A" level courses in physics or French?

The hospital doctor is able to use his specialist skill within the context that a priority decision has been taken (maybe in a committee) to allocate funds to kidney machines rather than deep ray treatment. In a similar way the welfare officer can use his professional skills only once there has been a decision to put him on the establishment.

It must be admitted that there is still considerable confusion even in polytechnics as to what differentiates legislative and executive decisions or perhaps more simply put, the distinction between policy making and policy implementation. The principal and heads of departments in colleges have found themselves involved in participative decision-making in colleges via the traditional English reaction to conflict of putting people on committees. However, that

participation relates to academic policy in the context of the objectives of discrete educational institutions. The responsibility for implementation and monitoring of that policy remains firmly with the principal and the heads. The arguments in sections 2.5 and 2.6 above in relation to independence of judgement, innovation and continuity could of course be arguments against any kind of democratic process, small scale or large, and must be seen in the political context touched upon earlier. However, in organisational terms 'integrity' has to be seen in the judicial setting - the disciplinary and appeals committees for which there is separate machinery. 'Continuity' might be more a reflection of the administrative function than the academic; in other words, the registrar's role. 'Innovation' within the context of organisation theory is not always a process associated with a single leader.

The mention of an educational staff college is particularly interesting since I work in the only example so far established in this country. Part of its brief is to improve the administration of further education colleges. The Further Education Staff College does run courses for principals alone but also for heads of departments, senior lecturers and often a mix of several hierarchical and professional groupings. Increasingly we deal with the staff development problems involved with the larger number of professionals at all levels involved in decision-making situations. Indeed at the recent BEAS Annual Conference one of the most significant definitions of staff development was to increase the capacity of all levels of staff to participate in the running of their institutions.

Paragraph 2.9 contains the phrase:

> "Could the headmaster be expected to find the heart and retain the authority to implement policies with which he could not in conscience concur? Would the debate ever stop or the work ever begin?"

Many further education principals had the same foreboding: some still have. It was felt that given a strong disagreement between principal and staff, taken to the governors, the principal might feel it necessary to resign if his views were not given precedence. There have been a large number of occasions when a principal's view has been defeated, even by vote, at academic board level; fewer disputes have actually been taken up at governing body level. But even defeated there, so far, no principal has been known to resign.

It is true that a few colleges, particularly at the higher education level, have been troubled by severe conflict of a political kind - that 'the debate has gone on and on'. There have even been strikes. The context, however, has usually not been entirely centred on the consensus form of government imposed. These colleges have had concurrent problems of identification, amalgamation and consensus. In the same way schools and college might be used to form a tertiary college having simultaneously to keep three balls in the air, each decision reflected in each area: to amalgamate administrations; to project new objectives for a 'different' institution; to 'consense'. Many institutions have successfully encompassed the complexity of such an operation. Those that have not - have failed perhaps because of the attempt to retain a traditional decision-making style within a new organisational package.

Paragraph 4.4 states an interesting truth:

> **"Any headmaster is thus very dependent on the willing co-operation of his colleagues. He knows that a school cannot be healthy unless the morale of its teachers is high and that this depends largely upon his treating them with consideration and being ready to listen to their opinions and explain his own decisions."**

It does not differentiate, though, between participation, consultation and negotiation. Consultation is at the discretion of the head. Negotiation enables a decision to be arrived at from set positions by interested parties. Participation should imply a group decision to which the participants are committed without the use of unilateral veto. It does not rule out the concept of trust. To reverse the argument, most academic boards will delegate back powers to the principal with whom there is a trust relationship. It is noteworthy that after the initial shock most principals in further education are now firmly committed to making the new system work.

Section V of the HMA publication deals with the functions of governing bodies. There is very little potential difficulty with this section since the headmasters want what the DES has already proved willing to give. There are still some problems for the governing body, however, which has responsibility for the general running of the college and is caught between the financial control of the LEA and the academic policy decisions of the academic board. It has power in staff appointments, particularly of the principal, vice-principal and the chief administrative officer and power over the distribution of teaching staff within the agreed establishment. It can vire within headings; spend within its budget up to £500 on its own initiative. However, nearly all of its functions are performed with another body. Its most definite powers, those of finance and staff appointments are really as an instrument of the college staff. In this sense the decision-making processes that move down from the LEA attach themselves as much to the college as to the governors. Possibly the most important role of the governing body has emerged simply as the guardian of public interest. It is there not to govern but to see that the college is governed properly - by the academic board? It is the arm of the college in law, the concept that enables it to act. It could be said to be the judicial part of the legislative, executive, judicial distinction; those processes which are usually in reserve. The independence of governing bodies is symbolised by the chief administrative officer of the college being clerk to the governing body rather than the chief education officer or his representative. Of course in further education the administrative function particularly that of the registrar is a much more highly developed process than is so far true in schools. I said earlier that what the heads wanted and what the DES is willing to give, in relation to the power of governing bodies, is similar. However it should be pointed out that the largest single difficulty the DES has had in agreeing on articles submitted by local education authorities is in the power financially given to the governors. Some of the smaller authorities are unwilling to give up in principle the rights vested in the committees formed from the elected members. Others have technical difficulties, within their standing orders, of shedding committee powers to the governing body.

All the processes involved in the changes of college government have, as stated at the beginning of this paper, been to devolve decision making processes downwards. The college as a whole has greater power over its own destiny than before. The principal as the leader of the institution has influence over a wider area of decision-making although to accommodate the new situation his style may very well have to change. Authority may be defined as a position (usually a hierarchical one) from which action can be commanded. Power is the ability to get things done. The two overlap but are not identical. In the overlap of authority, power and influence the commanding feature for colleges in the public sector, post-Weaver and Circular 7/70, is the changing boundaries between the three. From the point of view of further education, in formal terms, the chain of command has shifted substantially with staff and students being involved at all levels in matters of college policy - by representation on relevant committees. Consequently the authority compliance relationship has to be re-examined.

If power is the ability to get things done then among its requisites will be access to resources, including expert knowledge, but mainly allocation of staff, buildings and equipment. The implication of 7/70 is that resources decisions will be taken within committee structures rather than by individuals high in a rational, bureaucratic line structure - an equality not at teaching or curriculum levels only but also at policy level. The structure involved includes student as well as staff participation on specialist departmental committees, on resources co-ordinating committees (usually sub-groups of the academic board), on the academic board itself and the governing body: i.e. participation at all levels with the implication of a shared commitment buried in the vaguer concept of 'academic freedom'. All of course is contained by the framework of LEA control and the rest of the external environment.

As Noble and Pym (1970) point out the implications are twofold; firstly, that management is carried out by decisions within the committees; secondly, responsibility or accountability become difficult to pin down. Recommendations always seem to come from elsewhere. Noble and Pym describe this situation as an involuted hierarchy. Thus the ideas of authority and compliance have become diffused within the whole structure. One can argue that the benefit lies in a kind of parliamentary stability, that 7/70 exists to contain conflict and has more to do with stability than efficiency. There is, however, a counterproductive situation in that in a fast changing environment a college needs rapid clear decisions free of the need for professional expertise to contribute to policy which does not make for the traditional further education virtue of speedy response to external needs.

Power, we have boiled down to expertise, control of resources and access to the committee grid, which carries with it access to information. The important committees are the sub-committees of the academic board in that they make recommendations to the main board while vetting the proposals of the departmental committees. They have both positive and negative controls. In this sense, power resides with those who are enabled to sit on that number of committees which interlink information and function throughout the system.

These form the new oligarchy of the college, and the more efficiently they exercise power the more the committee structure itself serves as a power base only. Clearly the whole process involves the politicalisation of the policy making machine while the political activity may remain implicit - but implicit or explicit it results once more in centralisation of power.

We have, then, a paradox; a democratic committee structure producing a centralised oligarchy. Who forms the oligarchy? The fewer the elected representatives on the main board the less easy for them to be selected from the 'panel' to represent sectional interests on key sub-committees. Most instruments and articles of government insist that all heads of department sit, by right, on the main board. The principal is ex-officio on the governing body, chairman of the academic board, and usually entitled to sit on all college sub-committees. The situation is, therefore, heavily biased towards the survival, in another form, of the old hierarchy. A bias towards does not mean actual survival but it certainly implies change of role.

At this point one should go into the whole question of management of change: processes of groups' sensitivity, the nature of group decision-making and the relevance of such processes to a rapidly changing situation particularly in the educational environment. Fundamentally that is what the legislative changes are moving us towards in organisational terms. That however is the subject matter for another article.

Many arguments will centre on the question of student participation at any level inside or outside the institution. These arguments are well rehearsed elsewhere and I would only make two comments. The first is that the arguments against student participation seem to me to be rather similar to those against female suffrage at the turn of the century. Secondly most staff and governors who have had experience of student participation have found it a very useful and valuable experience. It would appear that as well as to identify those sensitive areas of unrest that might not otherwise come to light; of students themselves being educated in the democratic process, of surviving the processes of being involved in staff selection, it is felt that most students have a positive contribution to make to academic policy at all levels. There are legal questions centring on "over" and "under 18". But if further education experience has been useful in one respect it has been that student involvement has initially caused the most emotion and eventually created the most satisfaction.

In the summary of HMA recommendations item 5 argues that articles of government should contain a clause such as "The head shall be responsible to the governors for the general conduct, curriculum and discipline of the school". The whole point of the academic board, of course, is its concern with the curriculum. 7/70s statement says that the principal shall be responsible to the governors for the internal organisation, management and discipline of the college. It makes that distinction which is critical to this whole article between policy and implementation of policy. In this context it is the latter for which the leader is primarily responsible.

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A Headmaster Replies

T.A. Williams, Headmaster, Longsands School, St. Neots.

From those sections of the HMA report on the Government of Schools to which David Parkes refers in his paper, one may be left with the impression that the report is largely concerned with opposition to change. This is primarily because Parkes quite properly takes his brief from Circular 7/70 and because after careful consideration the HMA Working Party did not feel that an academic board of the kind prescribed in that circular or indeed advocated by the NUT ought to be adopted by the schools. The HMA report does, in fact, make several quite radical recommendations for change although it is not relevant to consider them in detail here. I will therefore confine my reply to three aspects of Parkes' paper.

pressures for change

David Parkes attributes the downwards devolution of the process of educational decision-making essentially to political and social pressures. The HMA pamphlet, as Parkes points out, acknowledges that these pressures are strong, at the same time it recognises that they may not always be beneficial. We feel therefore that schools should be able to resist such pressures when they conflict with the best interest of their pupils. Furthermore, without questioning the relevance of Parkes' point to the sphere of further education, much of the change which has taken place and is occurring in schools has been brought about on the initiative of headmasters themselves who have seen the need to change their style and delegate extensively as their schools have increased in size.

7.12 Many headmasters have already given a lead in overcoming these difficulties, especially in schools where size has forced careful

consideration of the principles upon which consultation should be based.

I believe that educational advantage and efficiency of organisation are no less valid reasons for change than political and social forces. Headmasters are properly concerned to see that these criteria continue to apply where change is contemplated. It is perhaps worthwhile mentioning too that many headmasters have given much thought to the need for careful preparation before consultation takes place; the ideal size of a committee, the heavy time demand that membership of a committee makes upon those required to serve, the relative advantages of different patterns of consultation, the need for all staff to be informed promptly and efficiently of decisions reached, and other associated problems.

the role of students

6.8 We are not in favour of pupil representatives on the Governing Body because we believe that all governors should be adults of maturity and experience.

and

it would be pointless in our view to allow an eighteen year old pupil to represent his fellows because he would have time before leaving school to attend no more than two or three meetings. We recognise, however, that occasional informal meetings between the governors and their chairman and senior pupils might be valuable in increasing mutual understanding.

We are not, however, so much at variance with the further education point-of-view as may be apparent at first sight. As the majority of our pupils are minors we feel that the role taken by students in the FE Colleges is one which can properly and advantageously be played by parents in the schools.

3.1 The claims of parents to a share in the government of schools attended by their children, either through representation on governing bodies or by less formal means such as the establishment of a convention that matters like school rules, homework and extra-curricular activities should be discussed by the Parents' Committee, have been supported by various organisations including the Confederation for the Advancement of State Education (CASE) and the more recent National Association of Governors and Managers. We regard the growth and increasing activity of these groups as a happy indication of the growing interest of parents in education.

6.3 We welcome unreservedly the suggestion that representatives of the parents of pupils should serve as governors. We believe that they may have a distinctive view of school problems which might not be expressed in their absence and which could be constructive as well as on occasion salutary.

the role of staff

Parkes quotes at length from that section of the HMA paper in which the Working Party sets forth its objections to the establishment of academic boards or staff councils. Whether the analogy to which he refers is apt or otherwise is largely irrelevant: it is used to heighten the point and not to make it. Whilst not, therefore, favouring the establishment of academic boards the HMA Working Party strongly advocates full consultation with staff on every aspect of school policy. Its reasons for this advocacy are based on the experience of a number of schools and are given as follows:

7.1 They (consultations) provide the headmaster with a useful check on his own judgement and they enable him to make full use of the ability and expertise of his colleagues. In formal meetings or in formal discussions, ideas of value will be expressed by senior and junior teachers while constructive criticism will reveal ways of improving existing policies or provisional plans.

7.2 Consultation will be of value, however, not only because it will produce new ideas and valid criticism but also because it will permit the headmaster to measure the response of his colleagues to suggestions and assess their attitudes to the matters under discussion. It may provide the headmaster with an opportunity to win willing support for an innovation which would otherwise be accepted only grudgingly. On the other hand, it may show him that a proposal needs to be modified, even if he remains convinced of its wisdom in the abstract, because he recognises that his colleagues have not been persuaded of the desirability of giving it the whole hearted support without which it will be unsuccessful. The opinion of the staff is a factor in almost every situation which a headmaster is required to assess and needs to be taken into account before he reaches a decision. Sometimes, by giving his colleagues information or offering them a reasoned argument, he will be able to change their views but he will hardly ever be in a position to ignore them.

7.3 By attaching importance to consulting his colleagues, a headmaster will encourage them to adopt attitudes which will benefit the school and its pupils. He will foster among them a feeling of involvement with the school community and a commitment to the welfare of their pupils. He will greatly improve his prospects of securing their co-operation and support even on those occasions when he decides that he cannot accept their advice. At the same time, he will help them to see themselves as members of a worthy profession rather than as mere functionaries and offer them an opportunity to enhance their understanding of educational and managerial problems, thus improving their quality as teachers and perhaps preparing themselves for more extensive responsibilities in the future.

I fail to understand why the benefits Parkes claims for participation cannot be achieved by consultation and without, at the same time, depriving the school of a means of prompt and clear decisions when the need arises. Parkes seems

to think that one of the objections the Working Party raises to the academic board, i.e. the possibility of lack o[illegible]an be overcome in further education by the registrar. It is difficult to see how this is possible unless the registrar is given powers to overrule the academic board. There is too no reason to believe that consultation by a sympathetic head is not as likely to control conflict as the participation which David Parkes advocates. The problem is frequently one of communication. How often, for example, does hostility to a decision stem from ignorance of the reasons behind it? Parkes' point that in submitting articles of government "very very few" of the 159 LEA's have opted for a Type C structure is interesting but inconclusive. He is, of course, right in stressing the importance of mutual trust. Ideally this should exist not only between principal and academic board, but also between principal and each and every member of staff. However, in an institution with upwards of 100 or even 50 staff there is no guarantee that by the creation of a small academic board trust will be improved.

Parkes' paper provides us with an illuminating commentary on Circular 7/70 and its effect on further education. It is clear that he himself has some reservations about its application to the colleges. I believe that the HMA Working Party was right in deciding that it would be unwise to place too much emphasis on precedents from higher education in reaching decisions about the government of schools.

PLENARY

The conference closed with a plenary review of the discussions which had taken place when, for two sessions following each of the main speakers, conference members broke into eight small groups. Basing their debate upon the Someravon case study prepared by Mr Parkes, most groups used the study as a stimulus for discussion of the issues it raised as they apply to a more general context. Of the eight groups, four reported their deliberations in the plenary sessions to the chairman, Mr Gerry Fowler MP, formerly Minister of State for Further and Higher Education and now Minister of Devolution. A brief discussion from the floor followed and the conference ended with Mr Fowler's comments on some of the issues mentioned in the summeries of group discussions.

Syndicate Reports

The reports of the eight discussion groups, (of which four were given verbally in the final plenary session of the conference) showed that attention had been directed largely to the question of participation, decision-making and accountability within the individual institution, rather than in any wider context. Most members of the conference agreed that there should be some form of participatory decision-making in schools. Opinion was divided, however, on whether this should take the form of informal consultation of staff by the head teacher or full participation within a formal committee structure. Supporters of the latter system were split over whether the committees should have advisory or executive functions.

purposes of participation

The root of the participation issue, in the view of one group, was whether or not it was desirable that the professional staff of the institution should participate fully in the control of that institution and whether this participation could be best achieved by a formal structure. Underlying this issue were the tensions of regarding academic staff as professionals, of seeing the development of participatory management as a method of operating schools, and the bureaucratic necessity (if it were so) of having a hierarchical structure which might conflict with the participatory structure.

It was felt by most people that changing attitudes, even in the smallest primary school, had made former management processes unacceptable, and that more modern management techniques could be applied to schools. Participation was advocated because it would secure better decisions and better acceptance of decisions, limit the concentration of power upon one person, diffuse the burden of work, harness skills at present laying dormant, and combat the communications problems and sense of alienation characteristic of those who work in large organisations.

The reasons why a head teacher would wish to introduce a participatory system in the form of an academic board, as in the Someravon case study, were identified. He would expect the academic board to be a support in comparison with his previously isolated position; he was anticipating a trend which might later be imposed from outside; he regarded the academic board as a machinery for the exchange of ideas and a body out of which innovation might come; he felt the academic board helped teachers feel committed to the institution and was thus an aid to the control of conflict; he felt that minority groups of 'wreckers' would be acting in a way in which they could be observed by others, rather than underground.

informal consultation

The spectrum of opinion among those members who were opposed to a formalised committee structure ranged from the view that participation (as compared with consultation) was an abrogation of the head's responsibilities as the person appointed to do a particular job to the belief that participation was essential, although there was no need to introduce a formal committee structure. It was generally agreed, however, that there should be some form of consultation of staff in decision-making. One group warned of pitfalls in adopting Mr. Jennings' third leadership strategy - the democratic approach - saying that there were schools in which a significant number of staff would not be able to cope with this type of leadership. Another group suggested that participation would tend to detach senior staff from their traditional loyalty to the head.

Considering the advantages and disadvantages of informal approaches to consultation, as outlined by Mr. Jennings, it was felt that whilst the articles of government remained in their present form, any lead had to come from the head. He could delegate duties - but not responsibilities. Any thrust for innovation had to originate from a head capable of carrying his staff forward. Members preferring informal methods of consultation rather than formal participation emphasised that a committee or any other type of formal meeting was not the only means of ensuring that staff had a part to play in decision-making - delegation or consultation by telephone were considered to be equally valid. One group stated that the appropriate means of participation involving the appropriate people could be employed according to whether the decision was concerned with long or short term policy, whether it could be settled by vote or should be resolved by the head after weighing up several viewpoints. The nexus of relationships within the school ensured that the head was aware of decisions taken by others. Teachers emerging from college with highly developed political skills would not necessarily wish to employ them in the overall running of the school, but in the decision-making aspects of their own posts or in the affairs of their union. Frequent changes of staff would prevent a head becoming too autocratic.

informal participation

While most members who favoured participation as compared with consultation felt a formal committee structure would be essential, a minority thought more informal systems were desirable. They feared that formal systems involved people in considering issues in which they had no interest and which had no relevance to their own activities. Another anxiety was that the academic

board system would result in such a volume of indecisive debate and discussion that people would begin to regard with nostalgia the good old days of autocracy and informal consultation. Other obstacles to the introduction of formal participatory frameworks were the strain of an administrative overload on staff, the domination of committees by older teachers who were mistrusted by the younger ones, a general lack of committee skills amongst academics, and suspicion among activist staff of any head who suddenly wished to adopt a participatory package. The suggestion was made that large meetings, while useful for the purpose of questioning, did not in fact further participation itself, and that the success of a participatory system depended upon the quality of communication outside the main meetings. On this point several groups agreed that no formal system could succeed if it ignored informal processes and expectations which existed within the institution.

Another obstacle to formal participation was the high cost it entailed. A reference was made to one of the polytechnics which had a highly structured process of policy formulation. At the lowest figure 30 members of staff were engaged upon servicing the participatory structure, particularly the academic board, its 14 main committees and 120 sub-committees. The administrative costs were in excess of £100,000 per year and to this had to be added the huge cost of academic staff time.

formal systems

Despite these difficulties, many members favoured formal systems of participation, because unstructured systems were no guarantee of genuine participation, and the most democratic informal systems could lead to a proliferation of full time staff meetings and waste of costly staff time. Moreover, an interested party might, deliberately or inadvertently, be overlooked. Another disadvantage of informal methods was that they were regarded in different ways by different levels of staff, i.e. a system which seemed open and free to senior staff might, to a young teacher, appear hierarchical control of extreme severity. One group mooted the idea that as a professional a teacher should not be subject to democratic pressures, but later concluded that this was part of his job.

Those who favoured formal structures said that they were needed for a number of reasons: the increasing size of schools; the speed of change; increased staff mobility; the need for accountability.

Some comparisons were drawn with FE experience in applying Circular 7/70. In the main, it was encouraging. One group said that colleges who had operated a 'Weaver' package for some years had found the results to produce almost unadulterated benefit. They felt that the differences Mr. Jennings had drawn between schools and FE colleges were imagined rather than real, and added that the BEAS itself might help dispel ignorance about other sectors of education by bringing together people from all parts of the education service. It was suggested that models of participatory systems different from that designed for FE colleges might be needed in schools, and perhaps different types of school might require different systems. For example in urban areas there might be a demand for more participation than in rural communities.

In devising a participatory system for a school it would be necessary to consider the level and type of consultation required, the time factor necessary, the problem that the while the system is being formed the school has to carry on operating, the scarcity of support staff, the rapid rate of change which makes forward planning difficult and the complications of increased staff mobility.

There was a measure of agreement that whatever formal structure was devised, it should derive from the natural working groups which already exist in the institution. One group emphasised the importance of systems being developed from the needs of those at the chalk-face - teachers and pupils - rather than the needs of the management systems. One suggestion was for a formal committee system which did not include an academic board. An academic board was seen as superfluous because all staff in any case had a positive role to play in decision making and therefore all would need to be ex-officio members of the academic board. It was argued that participation could instead be carried on through subject boards, departmental boards and working parties.

Some groups emphasised the fact that staff would be taking on new functions as well as a new structure. Perhaps this meant that participation should be introduced slowly in stages. It was suggested that the steps might be as follows: staff are made aware of the existence and the nature of major issues (via staff meetings); the head requests advice on major issues and assistance with implementation of decisions; ad hoc advisory committees are created to consider particular issues or policy areas; various staff are given advice and practice in chairing committees; the head delegates authority to individual committees; an academic board type of structure is then proposed.

training and assessment

There was some measure of agreement that training would be necessary to fit academic staff for their new participatory roles, although no clear suggestions were made as to how this might be done. One group said that as far as the head's new role was concerned, face to face contact would be more valuable than any literature or formal training.

It was acknowledged that it would be necessary to devise some form of assessment to measure the effectiveness of the structure which was devised and that this assessment should be as objective as possible.

The delicate subject of the assessment of the individual teacher's classroom performance was also debated in connection with the undesirability of promoting staff purely on the basis of their administrative skills. This system was attacked by many conference participants. However, it was accepted that basing promotion on teaching ability was dependent upon the setting up of some system of evaluating teachers in the classroom situation and that this would meet opposition from teachers who regarded it as an intrusion. It was suggested that the teaching profession was colluding with its employers by accepting managerial criteria for promotion as the price of non-interference in the classroom.

accountability

The question of accountability was discussed at length. Certain fundamental issues were raised, "What does accountability mean?", "Accountable to whom?", "Accountable for what?", "Are accountability and responsibility the same things?".

One group defined accountability as the obligation to justify the carrying out of legally delegated authority to a body which has the power to exercise legal sanctions. They also recognised the importance of accountability to bodies or groups which could exercise informal pressures.

Much thought was given to the question of whether democratic decision making was reconcilable with the notion of the head's accountability. One group thought it was, but only if the limits of democratic participation were known and agreed by the participants. On the issue of whether the head could be held accountable if there was an academic board, or whether the board was itself accountable, some members expressed the view that the head remained accountable in the same way as the head of any public organisation. Others said that the degree to which the academic board was held accountable depended on how far it accepted the doctrine of collective responsibility. The comment was made that, under the present system, the head had so many masters that it was easy for him to side-step detailed accountability by claiming, when confronted by 'x' that, on the issue in question, he was really accountable to 'y'. One group noted that the legal problems that schools feared might arise over accountability had not, in fact, arisen in the FE sector.

LEA

Some comments were made about participation in its broader sense and the division of power between internal and external bodies. One group argued that there must be a clear distinction between those decision to be taken by the LEA and those to be taken by the school. This raised the issue of whether the academic board would be concerned only with academic matters, or would also be taking decisions over resources to support their academic decisions.

governing bodies

Some attention was paid to whether more parents, and, in secondary schools, pupils, should be represented on governing bodies. One group warned that this might have too great an effect on such matters as the curriculum, with, for example, sex education being offered one year and banned the next. Another group noted that in extending governing body membership it was important to establish whether the representatives should be directly answerable to their constituents. It was feared that pupils on governing bodies might get too embroiled in narrowly political areas.

The criticism was made that governing bodies were ineffective at present as they were ignorant of their powers and had the wrong sort of people serving on them. There seemed to be a pervasive ethos which laid high priority upon the avoidance of conflict and which consequently repressed initiative. If governing bodies were to counterbalance the political insularity of the professionals within the schools it was suggested that they should be as representative as possible of both the community in which the school was situated and the various

sections of staff within the school; that they should be watchdogs on behalf of the interests of the LEA, the children, the institution and the community at large; and that there should be mutual understanding over which matters were left entirely to the head and his staff. The concept of the governing body as a 'consumer council' was welcomed, because it would enliven the body and be a buttress if it had considerable powers which it operated only in an emergency. It was suggested that different types of governing body might be appropriate in different areas. The demand for community involvement in urban areas was likely to be greater than in rural places because in the country there were communication and transport problems caused by the geography and wide catchment area which made participation difficult.

Someravon

With regard to the Someravon case study itself two main observations were made. Firstly, it was thought that planning the reorganisation in such detail was counterproductive, both in causing resistance among staff in the first instance and in encouraging inflexibility once the scheme was operating.

The second criticism of the Someravon head's handling of the introduction of a participatory structure centred on the job specifications of the staff. Members reacted strongly against the implication that pastoral work was not academic and felt that the senior mistress had been unjustifiably excluded from all significant policy decisions, especially as they related to curriculum development.

General Discussion

Following the reports of the groups' discussions, there was a brief debate from the floor on the subject of accountability before Mr. Fowler spoke. Anxiety was expressed over whether a person could be held accountable for the work done by other people to whom he or she had delegated tasks. It was agreed that feedback from these people was essential. One member asked how a head could possibly be truly accountable when he had security of tenure. Another remarked that one of the issues at the root of the discussion on accountability was the range of policy areas on which the school could make its own decisions. Comparisons were drawn with the French system in which the head of a school is really a 'mettre en scene' ensuring that decisions which have been made elsewhere are implemented, and with the Swedish system where institutional heads are elected and there is a different sense of accountability, those elected being responsible for seeing that legal requirements are carried out. In the UK the situation was complex. There was a series of policy areas over which the school had some control and it was often difficult to decide the precise point at which a decision should be placed. In that sense the head was a go-between between the institution and the LEA.

G Fowler, Minister for Devolution.

"Paradoxically, I am somewhat inhibited by my present position as Minister for Devolution in speaking of education, for it is the rule in any Government Department that one does not interfere with matters relating to other Departments. Therefore, as far as education is concerned, I can officially have no views. On the other hand I think it might be quite proper for me to pose one or two questions which occur to me as a result of hearing the reports of the group discussions - without, of course, attempting to suggest any answers.

implications of internal change for the wider structure

It struck me most forcibly during the feed-back that in both the case study and the discussion groups attention has been directed towards changes in the internal structure of institutions without consideration of whether there are resultant implications for the wider system of control - funding and the like. Perhaps, in pursuing the topic in the future, we should give some thought to whether there are implications or effects on the wider structure arising from changes within the institutions themselves.

Taking the application of Circular 7/70 to the polytechnics and colleges of FE as an example, there were both internal and external effects as the old structure was replaced by the new. Internal tensions resulted from the fact that many academic staff could not adjust themselves to a participatory situation. I recall an elected member of an academic board on which I sat as Assistant Director of a polytechnic requesting my permission to raise a particular issue.

A second problem was that of Principals who did not wish to belong to their institutions' governing bodies. One reason was that they found it embarrassing to sit as equals with members of their own staff. Another was the view that their previous position outside the governing body had been one of greater power vis-a-vis the external world, for then they had spoken as 'the experts' rather than simply as members of the governing body.

Pursuing the effect of the application of Circular 7/70 further up the system of control, there is no doubt that many local education authorities have found it difficult to adjust to a situation in which the role of the governing bodies of their institutions might be thought to have changed. In some cases they expected the supposedly more effective governing bodies to continue to report to the Sub-Committee which in turn reported to the Education Committee which on financial matters reported to the Finance Committee and so on. This was an example of grafting on to an old structure a new structure at one particular level. It is not apparent that it was wise to do this without thinking through the implications for the structure as a whole.

With regard to the schools level, if we decide that governing bodies should in future be more representative of the wider community - parents, staff and, in the case of secondary schools, pupils - yet leave them with exactly the same powers as they have today, I wonder how effective such governing bodies will be? We have to ask ourselves whether or not one of the central elements of power and its effective use is finance, and whether it is not imperative that if we are going to review decision-making structures within our institutions we

also re-allocate financial responsibilities? We have to ask ourselves whether governing bodies should be given specific financial powers, albeit in the allocation of funds provided for them by the local education authority, and whether this should, perhaps, be more than virement between 15 heads, for this in itself can be restricting.

Thus my first suggestion is that participation is an issue which should not be considered in too narrow a setting.

accountability and responsibility

On the subject of accountability and responsibility, I am not sure if there is any clear distinction between the two. It is possible to define accountability in its narrow financial sense, and this is an important definition because someone must be held responsible for the use of public money. Perhaps, then, it is better to use the word responsibility in referring to the wider issues being discussed, ie. who is responsible for the educational character and educational success of the school. At the present time most of us would hold the head responsible. But in what sense is he responsible? He is certainly not, in any real sense, accountable. Once in a post he is ensured security of tenure unless he can be proved guilty of embezzlement or is demonstrably mad. Therefore it is not sensible to pretend that in the current situation the head teacher is responsible to any external body, in an effective sense, for the educational success of his school.

Perhaps then, in considering accountability and responsibility in the schools we ought to separate general responsibility from financial accountability, and agree that while some individual or body has to be accountable for the expenditure of public funds we delude ourselves if we suggest that we have to build into new participatory structures some tight responsibility in respect of educational success on the argument that it already exists - it doesn't. On the other hand we might wish to argue that this wider responsibility ought to exist in any event, whether or not it did before.

Allied to this issue is the question, raised earlier, of where public (parental) criticism should be directed. At present it may be towards the local MP or Chief Education Officer, but there is a major problem resulting from the fact that the general level of knowledge of our governmental system is so poor that people do not really know whom to kick. I am not sure whether it might not be more effective to examine whether, if responsibility is transferred to governing bodies composed of essentially local people, so that parents do know who is making decisions, that problem does not change its character. Certainly, the present composition of governing bodies is such as to suggest that most people, unless they are very persistent, will never discover who exactly sits on the governing body of the school, let alone who they really are, as opposed to what their names are.

I have made some comments about changes in LEA structure which might be implied by changes in institutional structure and about finance. Perhaps I might now say a word about a range of topics which links with these.

promotion and assessment

At present the promotion situation within schools is such that the excellent teacher is promoted to the point where he or she does less and less teaching and eventually none at all. Equally, when a teacher moves, especially if it is from one LEA to another, appointment, and probably promotion, is based on fairly short references and an interview - and most of us place little reliance on interviews as predictors of capability, especially when the candidate's experience has been primarily in face-to-face teaching.

It seems to me that there is a major problem for the future in achieving some acceptable form of assessment and evaluation of classroom performance. It is not enough to avoid this on the grounds that it will not be liked by teachers. If we are to introduce a new kind of structure in schools which encourages staff to participate, whatever their rank, in administrative and managerial roles; which encourages staff to remain in face-to-face teaching rather than escaping to administrative roles, and provides better salaries for them; we must find some way of assessing teachers and some means of adapting the Burnham system to take account of the changed situation. If we are to move away from a hierarchy towards a more diffuse patterns within schools then it follows logically that there must be changes throughout the whole decision-making process in education, including Burnham.

is the head really necessary?

Finally, let me end with one question - the 64,000 dollar question, in a way. If we are to have a participatory structure I think most people are agreed that there will be tensions in reconciling it with the hierarchical structure which we have inherited in our institutions. Is not, then, the ultimate question, "Is the headmaster really necessary?" Ought we not to ask ourselves whether, with a different kind of governing body, with perhaps, an academic board whose chairman holds academic responsibility, with an administrator appointed to deal with day-to-day administrative details and responsible to the academic board, the head teacher is unnecessary? I am not making a positive suggestion but merely asking the question whether we can continue to justify the head teacher and the hierarchy below him, and at the same time say that we really want a radically different, participatory system of decision-making. I am not entirely sure that we are not seeking two contradictory objectives simultaneously, and that is a matter to which the educational world will have to address itself over the next twenty years."

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Dr. E J Brent,	Dr. T Powell Jones,
Dr. E W H Briault,	S Pratt,
Dr. E A Ewan,	R Long,
R Glatter,	C M Turner.

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Study conference members meet both in plenary sessions to hear and discuss lectures and in syndicates to discuss specific topics and projects. Syndicate discussion may be augmented by the employment of expert witnesses, visits to other establishments, and simulation exercises in administration and personnel management.

In 1963 the college undertook the publication of Session Papers outlining the work of conferences, and in 1967 the College Report Service was instituted to publish documents on a number of issues relating to tertiary education.

Within its Report Scheme, the Service publishes twenty Reports each year (forming one volume), which include accounts of the proceedings of selected study conferences, collections of papers and special reports. Subject matter covers the development of the objectives and instruments of further education; the inter-relationships between colleges, industry and other branches of education; specialised subject developments; college administration and management.

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